

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

---

All Graduate Plan B and other Reports

Graduate Studies

---

5-2016

## Design Theory in Practice Selected Projects in Costume Design

Mandolynn S. Browning  
*Utah State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/gradreports>



Part of the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Browning, Mandolynn S., "Design Theory in Practice Selected Projects in Costume Design" (2016). *All Graduate Plan B and other Reports*. 790.

<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/gradreports/790>

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Graduate Plan B and other Reports by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usu.edu).



DESIGN THEORY IN PRACTICE  
Selected Projects in Costume Design

By

Mandolynn S. Browning

A Plan B report submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

in

Costume Design

Approved:

---

Nancy Hills  
Major Professor

---

Leslie Brott  
Committee Member

---

Shawn Fisher  
Committee Member

---

Bruce Duerden  
Committee Member

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, UT

2016



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Acknowledgments.....	iii
II.	List of Figures.....	iv
III.	List of Plates.....	xi
IV.	Chapter 1: <i>Ah, Wilderness!</i> .....	1
	Synopsis and Introduction to the Play.....	1
	Concept.....	1
	Research and Design.....	3
	Evaluation.....	100
	References.....	103
V.	Chapter 2: <i>Noises Off</i> .....	106
	Synopsis and Introduction to the Play.....	106
	Concept.....	106
	Research and Design.....	108
	Evaluation.....	156
	References.....	158
VI.	Chapter 3: <i>A Year With Frog and Toad</i> .....	159
	Synopsis and Introduction to the Play.....	159
	Concept.....	159
	Research and Design.....	161
	Evaluation.....	219
	References.....	222

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These last three years have been the most difficult and most fulfilling of my life, and I would not have made it this far without the love and support of my wonderful family. Specific thanks go to my mother and step father, Sidley and Roger Harrison, for always being there with a word of encouragement and a laugh whenever I needed it most, and to my father and step mother, Larry and Anna Browning, for coming to every one of my shows and proudly telling everyone I was going to be a “Master of Halloween”. I would also like to recognize my grandmother, Ida Davis, for demonstrating what a strong, independent, courageous woman looks like and for being the person I hope I can become.

My success in graduate school is also due in a large part to my dedicated and talented instructors, and I cannot leave without acknowledging their contributions. Nancy Hills has not only been my teacher and mentor, but also a dear friend to me through the course of my studies, and I would not have developed as fully as a designer or professional without our private painting lessons in her dining room or long talks over mugs of tea. Another professor worthy of note is Shawn Fisher who consistently demanded my best and therefore led me to find the best in myself. Lastly I would like to recognize Bruce Duerden who took me as a costumer with no lighting experience and made me into a main stage designer in an appreciably short amount of time.

**LIST OF FIGURES**

1.01 Miller Family Color Pallet	4
1.02 Bar Color Pallet	4
1.03 Young Men in the Early 1900s	5
1.04 Oscar Wilde	5
1.05 Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 1	9
1.06 Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 2	11
1.07 Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 3	13
1.08 Gentleman Dressed Formally	14
1.09 Gentleman at a Picnic	14
1.10 Production Photo of Nat Miller, Act 1	18
1.11 Production Photo of Nat Miller, At 2	20
1.12 Production Photo of Nat Miller, Act 3	22
1.13 Woman in a Skirt and Blouse	23
1.14 Lacy, Fin de Sicle Blouse	23
1.15 Women in Automobile-riding Attire	25
1.16 Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 2	28
1.17 Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 1	30
1.18 Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 3	32
1.19 Young Man Dressed Formally	33
1.20 College Student Wearing University Letters	33
1.21 Production Photo of Arthur Miller, Acts 1 and 2	36

1.22 Backstage Photo of Arthur, Mildred, and Tommy Miller, Act 3	38
1.23 School-age Young Woman, 1900s	39
1.24 Leyendecker Painting of Two Young Women, 1907	39
1.25 Production Photo of Mildred Miller, Acts 1 and 2	43
1.26 Production Photo of Mildred Miller, Act 3	45
1.27 1919 Magazine Cover of Young Boys	46
1.28 Child Wearing Average Play Attire	46
1.29 Production Photo of Tommy Miller, Acts 1 and 2	49
1.30 Production Photo of Tommy Miller, Act 3	51
1.31 Ladies Attending University	52
1.32 Woman Vacationing at the Beach	52
1.33 Ladies in Calico Dresses	55
1.34 Production Photo of Lily Miller, Act 1	58
1.35 Production Photo of Lily Miller and Sid Davis, Act 1	59
1.36 Production Photo Collage of Lily Miller, Act 2	61
1.37 Production Photo of Lily Miller, Act 3	63
1.38 Painting of Drunkards at a Bar	64
1.39 Group of Intoxicated Men Outside a Bar	64
1.40 Two Men in Driving Attire	66
1.41 Production Photo of Sid Davis, Acts 1 and 2	68
1.42 Production Photo of Sid Davis, Act 3	70

1.43 Production Photo of Sid Davis, Act 1	71
1.44 Portrait of a Young Lady	72
1.45 Two Girls from the Early 1900s	72
1.46 Production Photo of Muriel McComber, Act 3	75
1.47 Group of Businessmen in the 1900s	76
1.48 Portrait of Henri Moser, 1900	76
1.49 Production Photo of David McComber, Act 1	79
1.50 Portrait of a House Maid, 1909	80
1.51 Painting of Washer-Women, 1905	80
1.52 Production Photo of Nora, Act 1	83
1.53 Portrait of a Young Rascal	84
1.54 Production Photo of Wint Selby, Act 1	87
1.55 Fashion Plate of Working Women	88
1.56 Woman Wearing a Suit	88
1.57 Production Photo of Belle. Act 2	91
1.58 Early 1900a Painting of a Bar Tender	92
1.59 Bar Tender in a Saloon, 1880s	92
1.60 Production Photo of the Bartender, Act 2	95
1.61 1900s Advertisement... Man in a Three-Piece Wool Suit	96
1.62 Production Photo of the Salesman, Act 2	99
1.63 Production Photo of the Entire Ensemble	102
2.01 Men in Business Suits	109

2.02 Production Photo of Garry as Tramplemain	111
2.03 Collage of 1960s and 60s Vintage Inspired Mod Fashion	114
2.04 Women in Their Underclothes	114
2.05 Production Photo of Brooke as Vickie in Her Mod Dress	116
2.06 Production Photo of Brooke as Vickie in her Lingerie	117
2.07 Preppy Man in a Sweater	120
2.08 Production Photo of Freddy as Phillip	122
2.09 Production Photo of Freddy as the Sheikh	123
2.10 Three Women in 1960s Wool Suits	125
2.11 Production Photo of Belinda as Flavia	127
2.12 Wrap Around Apron	128
2.13 Mrs. Slocombe	128
2.14 Production Photo of Dotty as Mrs. Clacket	130
2.15 Elderly Gentlemen in Sports Coats	132
2.16 Production Photo of Selsdon as the Burglar	134
2.17 Famous Actor, Daniel Craig	137
2.18 Famous Actor/Director Kenneth Branagh	137
2.19 Production Photo of Lloyd, Act 1	139
2.20 Production Photo of Lloyd, Act 2	140
2.21 Production Photo of Lloyd, Act 3	141
2.22 Professional Stage Manager	144
2.23 Amateur Lighting Designer	144

2.24 Production Photo of Poppy, Act 1	146
2.25 Production Photo of Poppy, Act 2	147
2.26 Production Photo of Poppy, Act 3	148
2.27 Professional Stage Technician	151
2.28 American Stage Technician	151
2.29 Production Photo of Timothy, Act 1	153
2.30 Production Photo of Timothy, Act 2	154
2.31 Production Photo of Timothy, Act 3	155
2.32 Production Photo of Entire Ensemble	157
3.01 Original Frog and Toad Cover Art	161
3.02 Original Frog and Toad Illustrations	161
3.03 Human Research for Frog	163
3.04 Animal Research for Frog	163
3.05 Production Photo of Frog and Toad	165
3.06 Production Photo of Frog and Toad, View from Behind	166
3.07 Production Photo of Frog in Winter Attire	167
3.08 Production Photo of Frog in a Bathing Suit	168
3.09 Human Research for Toad	171
3.10 Animal Research for Toad	171
3.11 Production Photo of Toad	173
3.12 Production Photo of Frog, Toad, and Moles in Winter Attire	174
3.13 Production Photo of Toad in His Bathing Suit	175

3.14 Human Research for Man Bird	177
3.15 Animal Research for Man Bird	177
3.16 Production Photo of Man Bird	179
3.17 Human Research for Lady Birds	181
3.18 Animal Research for Lady Birds	181
3.19 Production Photo of Lady Bird	183
3.20 Human Research for Snail	185
3.21 Animal Research for Snail	185
3.22 Shibori Dyed Fabric	185
3.23 Production Photo of Snail	187
3.24 Human Research for Turtle	189
3.25 Animal Research for Turtle	189
3.26 Production Photo of Turtle	191
3.27 Human Research for Lizard	193
3.28 Animal Research for Lizard	193
3.29 Production Photo for Lizard	195
3.30 Human Research for Mouse	197
3.31 Animal Research for Mouse	197
3.32 Production Photo of Mouse and Turtle	199
3.33 Human Research for Squirrels	201
3.34 Animal Research for Squirrels	201
3.35 Production Photo of Squirrels	203



3.36 Human Research for Father Frog	204
3.37 Production Photo of Father Frog and Mother Frog	206
3.38 Human Research for Mother Frog	208
3.39 Production Photo of Father and Mother Frog	210
3.40 Human Research for Young Frog	212
3.41 Production Photo of Young Frog	214
3.42 Human Research for Moles	216
3.43 Animal Research for Moles	216
3.44 Production Photo of Moles in Winter Attire	218
3.45 Production Photo of Ensemble	221

**LIST OF PLATES**

1.01	Richard and Arthur Miller, Act 1	8
1.02	Richard, Nat, and Lilly Miller, Act 2	10
1.03	Richard Miller and Muriel McComber, Act 3	12
1.04	Nat Miller and Sid Davis, Act 1	17
1.05	Nat, Richard, and Lily Miller, Act 2	19
1.06	Nat and Essie Miller, Act 3	21
1.07	Essie and Lily Miller, Acts 1 and 2	27
1.08	Essie and Lily Miller and Sid Davis	29
1.09	Essie and Nat Miller, Act 3	31
1.10	Arthur and Richard Miller, Act 1	35
1.11	Arthur, Mildred, and Tommy Miller, Act 3	37
1.12	Mildred and Tommy Miller, Acts 1 and 2	42
1.13	Mildred, Arthur, and Tommy Miller, Act 3	44
1.14	Tommy and Mildred Miller, Acts 1 and 2	48
1.15	Tommy, Mildred, and Arthur Miller, Act 3	50
1.16	Lily and Essie Miller, Acts 1 and 2	57
1.17	Lily, nat, and Richard Miller, Act 2	60
1.18	Lily Miller and Sid Davis, Act 3	62
1.19	Sid Davis and Nat Miller, Acts 1 and 2	67
1.20	Sid Davis and Lily Miller, Act 3	69
1.21	Muriel McComber and Richard Miller, Act 3	74

1.22	David McComber, Wint Selby and Nora, Act 1	78
1.23	Nora, David McComber, and Wint Selby, Act 1	82
1.24	Wint Selby, David McComber, and Nora, Act 1	86
1.25	Belle, Salesman, and Bartender, Act 2	90
1.26	Bartender, Belle, and Salesman, Act 2	94
1.27	Salesman, Belle, and Bartender, Act 2	198
2.01	Garry as Tramplemain	110
2.02	Brooke as Vickie	115
2.03	Freddy as Phillip	121
2.04	Belinda as Flavia	126
2.05	Dotty as Mrs. Clacket	129
2.06	Selsdon as the Burglar	133
2.07	Lloyd, Acts 1 and 2	138
2.08	Poppy, Acts 1 and 2	145
2.09	Timothy, Acts 1 and 2	152
3.01	Frog	164
3.02	Toad	172
3.03	Man Bird	178
3.04	Lady Birds	182
3.05	Snail	186
3.06	Turtle	190
3.07	Lizard and Mouse	194

3.08	Mouse and Lizard	198
3.09	Squirrels	202
3.10	Frog Family	205
3.11	Frog Family	209
3.12	Frog Family	213
3.13	Moles	217

## CHAPTER 1

### AH, WILDERNESS!

#### **Synopsis and Introduction to the Play**

*Ah, Wilderness!* is Eugene O'Neill's only comedy. The story takes place over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend and revolves around Richard Miller, a misunderstood teen who rebels against 1906 society with suggestive poetry and declarations of communism. When his girlfriend, Muriel, spurns him at the behest of her father, his antics take a darker turn and lead him to a night of drinking, prostitutes and fist fights. However, all ends well as the two lovers reunite and Richard is surrounded by the love and compassion of his family.

*Ah, Wilderness!* was produced at the Old Lyric theatre in the winter of 2014 and was directed by guest director, Paul Barnes. Shawn Fisher designed the set, Bruce Duerden designed sound, and Steven Piechocki designed lights. My advisor for this project was Dennis Hassan, and Louella Powell served as a mentor. I was given a budget of two-thousand dollars and roughly two and a-half months from the first concept meeting to opening night for the project. While some of the costume pieces were rented, many—especially the women's—were constructed for the show.

#### **Concept**

Our first concept meeting took place in September, and this was the first time I had the opportunity to meet the director, Paul Barnes. He presented us with his artistic vision: a memory, light and soft, of a happy time in Richard's life. It was to be alive with poetry but also truthful. He also emphasized moderation in all aspects of the play, such as minimal hair volume and corseting, muted colors, manageable heels, etc. We spoke about each character individually and about

the family as a whole, and we came to the conclusion that, although well-respected, the Millers were an average middle-class family. None of the characters, with an emphasis on Richard, were to be too flashy or extravagant, and none based on stereotypes. We also talked in length on the character of Belle, the prostitute. It was important to Mr. Barnes that she wasn't caricature, but a real girl who was down on her luck. He presented pictures and books of what he envisioned the characters to look like. Although they were not all from the correct period, they conveyed a theme of cleanliness and simplicity of line and silhouette. It was from that foundation that I began my research.

After the initial concept meeting, Mr. Barnes flew back to Michigan to finish work on another project. Following his departure, we communicated over emails and Drop Box. Up until this point I had never worked long-distance with a director before, and I expressed concerns about the communication difficulties and lack of face to face collaboration that the separation would create. Since designs had to be finalized and presented to the cast the day he returned, we decided that my renderings, although true to the silhouette, basic color palette, and my artistic concept, should be simple in nature and that much of the detail work would be saved until he was present and I could show him in person my collection of fabrics, construction patterns, pulled garments, and trims. Thus, while many of my designs do match the final product, several fabric patterns, trim pieces, and colors vary from renderings to final product.

The set designer, Shawn Fisher, and I discussed how the set and costumes would work together to create the overall picture of the show. Since my costumes were to be historically correct, the silhouette and colors moderate in nature, he wanted to make the set abstract to obtain an interesting contrast. He rendered it almost entirely white, so that eliminated pure white from my color pallet, and informed my decision to use shades of off-white, cream, and beige. I

also conferred with Steven Piechocki, the lighting designer, and together we came up with the idea to contrast the light and happy memory of the family's house with the darker, moodier memory of Richard's experience at the bar. For this, we would both use more saturated colors, and I would use heavier, coarser fabrics.

## **Research and Design**

Since I was trying to be as historically accurate as possible, it was important that I find primary sources of research such as pictures and illustrations from the period. Luckily for me, the Edwardian era is a favorite among amateur clothing historians, and I found several images on sites such as Pinterest and various blogs that I was able to track back to their original sources. I was also able to find abstract images I felt conveyed my impression of each character's personality. In total, I accumulated around 300 images of general research and narrowed down specific character images from those.

The area in which I had the most difficulty was color. I wanted to uphold Mr. Barnes vision of light and airy neutrals but still make the designs interesting enough to captivate the audience. After several failed color-schemes and emails back and forth, I finally hit upon success. Drawing inspiration from the play's setting (Independence day) I took the traditional red and blue and faded them down to dusty rose hues and antiqued blues and used those to liven up the monochromatic palette (See Figure 1.01). Because red and blue are primary colors, I chose to contrast them with mostly secondary colors (green, purple, and orange) for Belle, Bartender, and Salesman in the bar scene. I liked this combination also because, along with dark brown, they comprise the colors of beer and wine bottles which fit into the atmosphere of the bar (See figure 1.02).

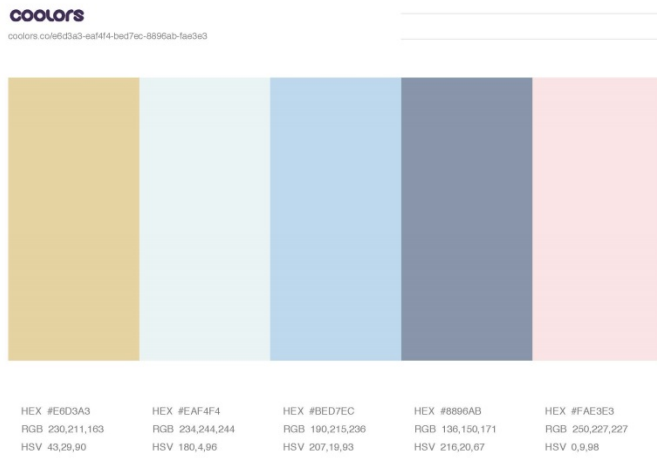


Figure 1.01 Miller Family Color Pallet



Figure 1.02: Bar Color Pallet



### Richard Miller

Richard is a sixteen-year-old boy just out of high school but trying to be older and more sophisticated than he is. His literary heroes are Ibsen, Shaw, Swinburne, and Wilde—the latter of which inspired some of my earlier drawings of the character but had to be toned down because they were too foppish. In my research, I focused on young men of the period with artistic or poetic flair and warm, passionate colors. Figures 1.03 and 1.04 exhibit the photographs that influenced my design the most because of the rakishness and careless romanticism with which the clothing is worn.



Figure 1.03: Young men in the early 1900s



Figure 1.04: Oscar Wilde

Because the play takes place over two full days, there are three costume changes for Richard. In the beginning, I chose a medium-tan cotton shirt and cotton slacks, a darker brown cotton collarless vest, and a pair of dark brown boots. The neutral colors complement those of his family, but his overall look is darker and more brooding to highlight his discontent during the patriotic festivities. He rolls his shirt sleeves up and his hair is tousled to give him a “devil-may-care” attitude which his mother, Essie, constantly fusses with. The carelessness of his attire also mimics that of ‘the working man’ that Richard respects while rejecting the clean-cut sobriety of the social elite that he wishes overthrown. The main point of interest in his costume is a burgundy silk-velvet scarf, the darkest red on stage and a symbol of his poetic rebellion: a metaphorical medal of bravery around his neck, which gives the actor something to play with and use during times of heightened drama. It is the only velvet featured during the show and contrasted with the lighter fabrics used on the rest of his family. Overall, I wanted to give the impression of a boy desperately trying to prove his worth as a man of modern ideals (See Plate 1.01). The production photo of this costume is viewable in Figure 1.05.

In the first scene of act 3, Richard appears in the family room late in the morning after sleeping off his drunken stupor the night before. He is dressed in a cotton pile bath robe and pajama pants. In my original design, the robe and pants were brown and grey, respectively, and features in Plate 1.02; however, once production began, I thought it better to give him more color. My reasoning was that he is the main character of the piece and the one we should be most interested in; therefore, his costume should be the most eye-catching. With this in mind, I changed his colors to predominantly blue. It also served as a contrast to his red of the previous acts, since his experience at the bar—a real taste of the rebellion he longed for—dampened his fiery spirit. I let him retain a small amount

of his passionate nature by adding red trim to the collar of his robe and giving him a burgundy belt to tie it with. The final product is displayed in Figure 1.06.

At the end of the first scene in Act 2, Richard discovers in a letter that Mildred does in fact love and admire him, and he sneaks out to a romantic rendezvous. He has experienced much and grown as a character by this point in the play, no longer having to put on a facade of manliness or superiority. Thus I originally designed for his ending costume to be much lighter in color so that he wouldn't look as gloomy as his Act 1 costume. I also made the silhouette simpler with just a shirt and trousers as evident in Plate 1.03. In this design, he retained his scarf, as I thought of it as his personal signature piece, but it's color is more subdued, and he wears it more casually than in the first two acts.

In dress rehearsal Mr. Barnes and I decided that with the lighter shirt and trousers, Richard's character had now become too pale, and to counteract it I gave him back his brown vest. I then subtracted the scarf so that the costume would not too closely resemble the one from the previous act, and instead gave him a boater hat to which I had affixed a red band. This way he still had the red which was associated with his character, but the overall look was more boyish and less presumptuous (See Figure 1.07).





Plate 1.01: Arthur and Richard Miller, Act 1





Figure 1.05: Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 1



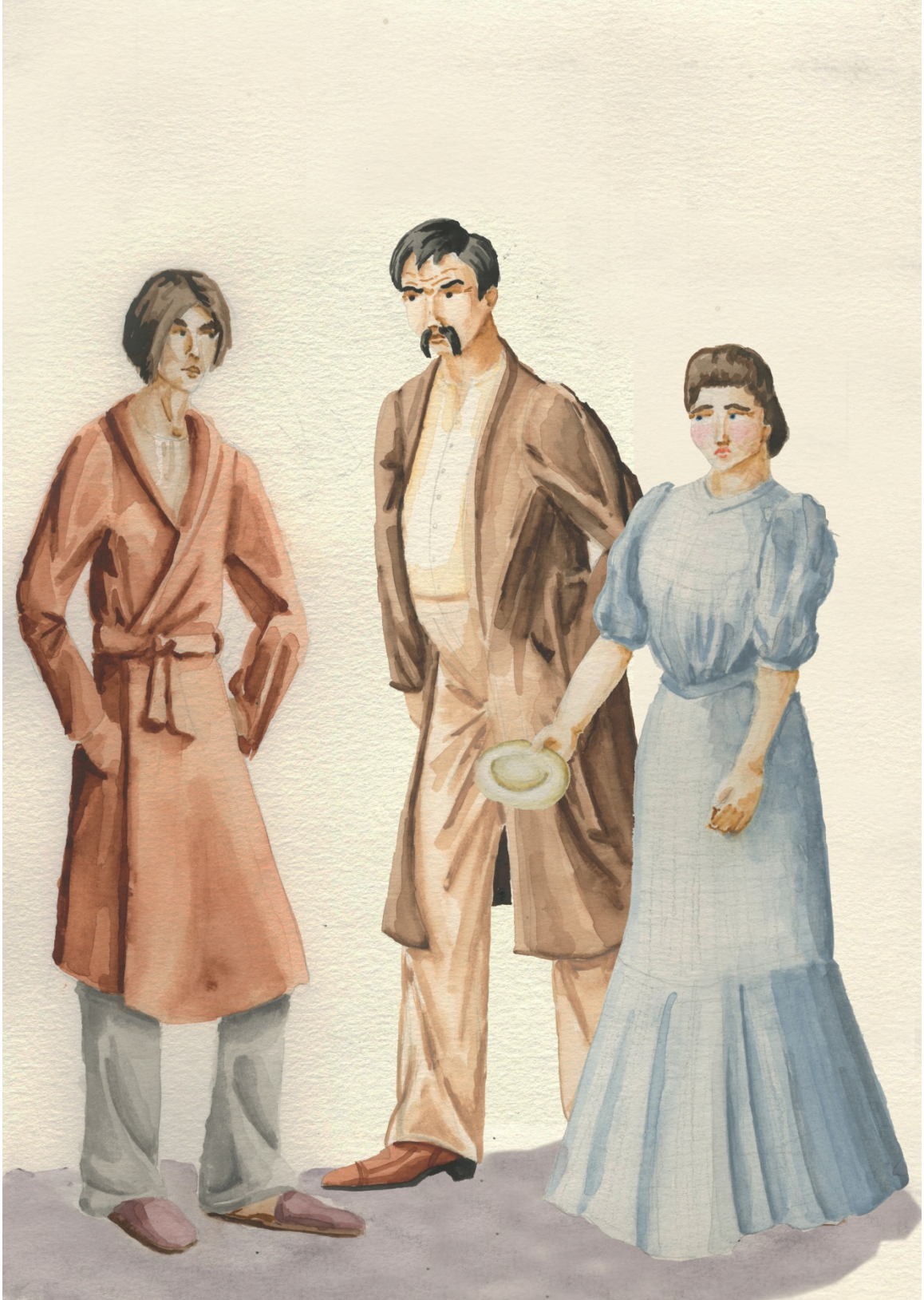


Plate 1.02: Richard, Nat, and Lilly Miller, Act 2



Figure 1.06: Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 2



# *Ah, Wilderness!*

Act 3

*Richard*

*Muriel*



Plate 1.03: Richard Miller and Muriel McComber, Act 3





Figure 1.07: Production Photo of Richard Miller, Act 3

### Nat Miller

Nat is a fair and loving father as well as a respected newspaper owner. Throughout the play he is kind-hearted and generous with his wife and children, spoiling his youngest two and gently rebuking his older sons when they need it. He gets frustrated with his wife, Essie, whose indecisiveness and nagging confuses, amuses, and irritates him, but he manages his temper for the most part, and replies with humor. While a productive business man, his main concern and satisfaction lies with his family and friends rather than on money or status, and I wanted to incorporate all this into his costume. Therefore, I researched family men and newspaper editors of the mid 1900s. Below are the images that influenced my design the most. (See Figures 1.08 and 1.09) Both gentlemen pictured wear formal trousers, vests, and hats, but neither let those constraints of genteel society stop them from spending quality time with their family.



Figure 1.08: Gentleman dressed formally



Figure 1.09: Gentleman at a picnic

At the top of Act 1, the Miller family has just finished eating breakfast and is contemplating what to do with the holiday. It was clear to me that Nat, because of his laid-back nature, would not be fully dressed at this point. Thus, I designed this outfit without vest or jacket and placed him simply in a cotton button-up, linen trousers, and tie along with suspenders and brown boots. His colors run from cream to light tan, his tie being the most colorful part of his attire to show his sense of humor and a fun-loving nature (See Plate 1.04). The style of the tie was the only thing that changed from design to production. I decided that instead of the blue and red stripes of the original, I would give him an equally zany large plaid print, but in hues that would closer match those of his wife, Essie. The production photo of the final costume is presented in Figure 1.10.

There are a few variations of this costume throughout the first and second Acts. For example, at the end of Act 1 when Nat and Sid come home from the picnic, I accessorized his outfit with a straw boater hat with a muted-red ribbon and tan light wool jacket. Later, at the end of Act 2, all the family has waited up late to watch for Richard's return. In this scene he has removed all accessories, including his tie in preparation for bed. In my original design for this scene, I gave him a robe and slippers (See Plate 1.05) but decided during dress rehearsal that he would still be decently, although not as formally, clothed in case he needed to go out and find Richard. Figure 1.11 is a production photo of this dressed-down look.

At the start of Act 3 it is midday on a work day, and Nat has only returned home for dinner to check on and scold Richard. Since he has been at the office all morning, I made him look more professional in a heavy cotton vest and tie along with his jacket and boater from the earlier scene. However, I didn't want him to look too stiff or rigid since this costume had to carry him through to the end of the show which is a light and romantic scene with his wife and son.

Therefore, his colors remain pastel in nature with hues of dusty reds as accents, and I chose pieces with lighter, less constricting fabrics (See Plate 1.06). The only changes made from the rendering to production were the colors of the tie and vest, which I switched to add more color on stage. Thus the vest, which took up a larger area, was a pale rose and the tie a darker tan with burgundy stripes as is presented in Figure 1.12.





Plate 1.04: Nat Miller and Sid Davis, Act 1



Figure 1.10: Production Photo of Nat Miller



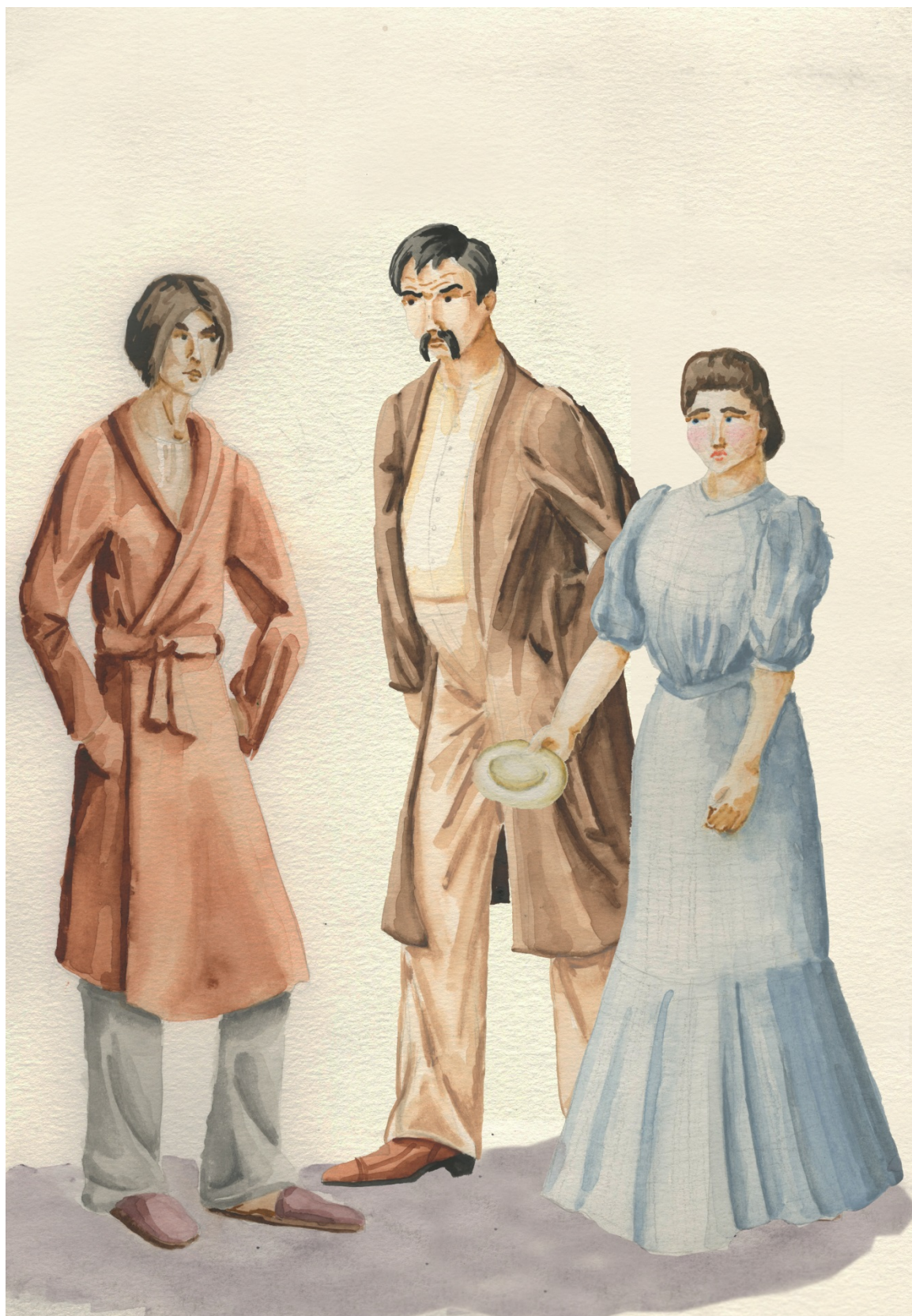


Plate 1.05: Richard, Nat, and Lilly Miller, Act 2



Figure 1.11: Production Photo of Nat Miller, Act 2





Plate 1.06: Nat and Essie Miller, Act 3





Figure 1.12: Production Photo of Nat Miller, Act 3

### Essie Miller

Essie is the mother of the Miller family and presides over them with natural tenderness and a tendency to hover. She is very feminine in nature, and embodies the popular stereotypes that belong to older women at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: chatty, nagging, and indecisive. Still it is evident that her family is her utmost pride and joy. Therefore, I began my research by looking up turn-of-the-century mothers and older women of the Fin-de-siècle period. I chose this slightly earlier period of design for Essie because, being middle-aged and of a prudent manner, she would not have jumped at every new fashion trend, but the Fine de Sickle style is not so old that she would have looked foolish or frumpy for wearing it. Lastly, the script mentions she is plump, and the pigeon breast and puffy sleeves added a certain amount of bulk to her frame. I found a few historical images in my research that aided in my designs, and a couple images of soft, feminine textures and fabrics that I felt fit her character. (See Figures 1.13 and 1.14).



Figure 1.13:  
Woman in a skirt  
and blouse.



Figure 1.14: Lacy, Fin-de-siècle  
blouse

At the top of the play, Essie and her family are enjoying a morning at home; however, unlike Nat who I wanted to dress down for the relaxed, holiday occasion, I wanted Essie to always look her best as a model for her family to follow. With this in mind I designed a blouse and full skirt combination that, along with a brooch at her throat, was fresh and pretty without being too overdone. Since all the Miller-home scenes were staged on the front porch (rather than inside the house which is written in the script), I also gave her a parasol. The softy tinted burgundy of both the brooch and parasol lent some color to her otherwise neutral ensemble, and the lace on her blouse added texture and feminine interest to soften the piece. (See Plate 1.07).

Essie's costumes were all built for this show, and while shopping I found a cotton fabric embroidered with a white on white Art Nouveau design, which I dyed down to a soft cream and overlaid with cream lace on the sleeves and yoke. The style-lines were enhanced with soft pink trim and a similarly colored lace belt fit over a tan, linen full skirt with train that was also embroidered with flowers. These changes I felt made her ensemble even more feminine, and the texture added interest to the costume. Because the blouse and skirt were of the same shade of tan, the outfit looked like a dress rather than a blouse and skirt; therefore, the ensemble became more 'fancy' and more suited to her version of the holiday atmosphere. The final product is presented in a production photo in Figure 1.16.

Essie wore this costume, with small variations, through the entirety of Acts 1 and 2. For example, when preparing for dinner in Act 1, she dons a pink apron over her ensemble in order to keep it clean while she readies the table, and once the meal is served, I removed the apron and accessorized the ensemble with a pink strand of pearls as a small way of embracing the practice of sprucing up for dinner.

At one point in act 1 she, Lily, and Sid all enter stage prepared for an automobile ride. I researched driving apparel and added to her original ensemble a woman's riding duster, hat with a pink veil, white gloves, and a purse. The research I found for these objects is below in Figure 1.15, and the rendering for the riding costume is displayed in Plate 1.08. Luckily we were able to rent the heavy canvas dusters for all three characters, and I substituted a parasol for a purse in the final design as it was more fitting for a drive out into the country. Since the duster was bulky and hid her womanly frame entirely, I also added flowers to her hat to make more of a soft, feminine statement. (See Figure 1.17).



Figure 1.15: Women in automobile-riding attire

Because Act 3 takes place the day after July 4th, I felt Essie's attire could be less formal. I designed a blouse and skirt combination of obviously different colors so that the audience would recognize them as different pieces rather than a single dress. The silhouette of her blouse retained the robust sleeves, but this time they were smaller and the fullness sat below the elbow so they were less of

a formal statement. I designed this blouse with lace trim to similarly emphasize her soft, womanliness and placed bands of it around her forearms and throat to expose a small amount of skin. The ending scene is warm and romantic, focusing just as much on the love Essie and Nat have for one another as on their love for Richard, and I wanted her to look not only feminine but beautiful and even a little sexy so that the audience would see her as Nat sees her. The muted red hues of her past costumes follow through to this one in her belt and as trim on her skirt that creates an Art Nouveau pattern at the bottom. (See Plate 1.09).

In production I added visual interest to her embossed cotton blouse by trimming it in a beige ribbon similar in color to the light wool of her skirt, and off-beige lace trim at the yoke, elbows, and throat. I also opted to make the entirety of her collar and sleeves lace so that the texture would be visible from stage and added a brooch to draw attention to her throat. The resulting costume is presented in Figure 1.18.





Plate 1.07: Essie and Lilly Miller, Act 1 and 2



Figure 1.16: Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 2





Plate 1.08: Essie and Lilly Miller and Sid Davis



Figure 1.17: Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 1





Plate 1.09: Essie and Nat Miller, Act 3



Figure 1.18: Production Photo of Essie Miller, Act 3



### Arthur Miller

Arthur is the Millers oldest child, a Yale junior, and football athlete. He thinks of himself as a 'man', smokes a pipe, and is affronted when Nat tells him to go outside with the rest of the 'kids'. At 19, he is a young man who takes himself far too seriously and looks down on his siblings, especially Richard. I wanted to capitalize on his Ivy-League attitude and researched young men attending Yale and similarly ranking schools, as well as academic fashions of the time. Below are some images that informed my designs the most. (See Figures 1.19 and 1.20). The first image of the young man sitting in a chair evokes the well-dressed, mature, somber gentleman Arthur imagines himself to be while the school ensignia of the athlete in the second image inspired me to use university lettering when designing Arthur's letterman sweater.



Figure 1.19: Young man dressed formally



Figure 1.20: College student wearing university letters

Like his mother, Arthur believes in putting his best foot forward, especially on the 4th which he considers a very important holiday. I wanted it to look as if he took care with his appearance, with deliberate precision so each piece would coordinate: He aspires to great things and must look the part. Therefore on the morning of the first Scene, I rendered him in a smart-looking cotton shirt with large collar, nicely creased cream linen trousers, and a cream linen jacket with blue pinstripes. To top off his spiffy attire, I gave him a blue tie and boater with a blue ribbon. (See Plate 1.10). This particular design made it to stage without any changes, except the final jacket lacked elbow patches, and the production photo is located in Figure 1.21.

Arthur returns to the stage at the beginning of Act 3. The patriotic holiday over, I let him relax his fashion somewhat and exchanged his sports jacket for a light, cotton sweater with the Yale logo on the breast. Thankfully, Yale's sports blue as its school color, so I didn't have to diverge from my color palette. I paired this with his original shirt with the crisp, starched collar, a second pair of nicely pressed cotton trousers, and a grey necktie. This relaxed feel showed off his school pride and the branded sweater looks enough like a letterman sweater of the period to reflect his athletic background. His overall look is preppy and more sophisticated than the rest of the family. (See Plate 1.11).

Once all the pieces were assembled, the director and I agreed the Act 3 costume was too pale and that it was illogical to have Arthur wear a sweater in the July heat; however, we both liked the idea of the preppy sweater. I found a grey cotton sweater vest as a lighter substitute and paired it with a blue and grey striped necktie. Unfortunately, the blue of the Yale logo disappeared once paired with the heather grey of the sweater vest, so we ended up not using the letters. Even with these changes, the overall look still captured what I had originally intended, as shown in Figure 1.22.



Plate 1.10: Arthur and Richard Miller, Acts 1 and 2





Figure 1.21: Production Photo of Arthur Miller, Act 1





Plate 1.11: Arthur, Mildred, and Tommy Miller, Act 3



Figure 1.22: Backstage photo of Arthur, Mildred, and Tommy Miller, Act 3



### Mildred Miller

Mildred is the Miller's only daughter and shows the signs of growing up in a house full of boys: tripping and playing chase with Richard, teasing Arthur, and declaring "No wedding bells for me, Pa." when her father asks her if she plans on catching a rich husband. Still, she flirts with the local boys, and even her mother can't remember which young man she is seeing presently. I wanted to combine this sense of independent tomboy and girlish flirtation in her manner of dress. I began my research with pictures of young suffragettes and school girls. Below are the two pictures that were the most helpful when designing her costumes: Figure 1.23 struck me as girlish but not frivolous and the sporty, slightly masculine aspects of the vest and cravats in Figure 1.24 inspired the 'tomboy' aspect of Mildred's attire.



Figure 1.23: School-aged young woman, 1900s



Figure 1.24: Leyendecker painting of two young women, 1907

For Mildred's Act 1 and Act 2 attire, I chose a light tan cotton dress with blue accents at the waist and bottom of the skirt. I also designed her neckline with a ribbon tie at the throat, which was a familiar feature for independent young women at the turn of the century. The sleeves of the dress come only a little way past the elbows because she is a girl, only fifteen, and it was common for young ladies to have shorter sleeves; the hem of her skirt is likewise reduced to above the ankle, displaying her white, heeled boots. The silhouette is common for girls of the era but not as fussy and frilly as some. In fact, the only element of girlish frivolity I allowed are bows in her braids, so she could swing them around when playing at being coquettish. (Reference Plate 1.12)

This, along with her Act 3 ensemble, are perhaps the two costumes which changed the most from rendering to stage. Early on in the construction process I discovered that, like Arthur, Mildred's first outfit was too plain and monochromatic to be interesting from the audience. I therefore found a way to liven it up by constructing her skirt out of cream, burgundy, and blue plaid wool, which was lightweight and airy enough to give free movement when she walked. I then paired this skirt with a cream cotton/polyester blouse that had a ruffle at the throat which resembled the original ribbon ties, and blue hair ribbons to add further color. To emphasize the ruffle at the neck, I trimmed it in blue, and added the same ribbon to the sleeve cuffs. The white boots looked too dainty against the bold pattern of the skirt, so I replaced them with brown, medium-heeled shoes. While the overall look (pictured in Figure 1.25) was more colorful than the original rendering, the clean silhouette and lack of frills achieved a no-nonsense, tomboy appearance.

Mildred is onstage for less than fifteen minutes in Act three, with one major scene, yet she plays the pivotal role of giving Richard the second letter from Muriel imploring him to meet her and thereby launching the final two

scenes of the act. I therefore wanted to give Mildred's costume as much impact as possible without it being overbearing. I designed a pink striped vest over a blouse and skirt. She is the only female who wears a vest in the play, and it further symbolizes her tomboy nature. The blouse was cream with full sleeves and a ruffle around the throat to give her a pinch of femininity, and the beige skirt (belted at the waist) was plain and not very full so as to contrast with neither the vest or blouse. She keeps the bows in her hair from the first act so that her costume does not look too grown up. (See Plate 1.13).

While the final design retained all the elements of the original rendering, Mr. Barnes liked a different vest I pulled (a blue and cream colored cotton garment with a floral pattern on the front) so much that I changed directions and created a costume with that as a starting point. From there I chose a blue and white striped skirt that happened to be fuller than the original design, but stuck to a plainer cotton blouse with fitted sleeves to curb the frilliness of the overall ensemble, pictured in Figure 1.26. In the end the costume was more girlish in nature than I had intended, but it still succeeded as being a visually impactful piece for the act.





Plate 1.12: Mildred and Tommy Miller, Acts 1 and 2



Figure 1.25: Production Photo of Mildred Miller, Act 2





Plate 1.13: Mildred, Tommy, and Arthur Miller, Act 3





Figure 1.26: Production Photo of Mildred Miller, Act 3

## Tommy Miller

Tommy is an energetic boy of eleven and the first character we meet at the top of the play as he runs onstage waving his firecrackers. He is constantly being reprimanded for his antics and spends much of the play banished to the outdoors. Despite this he is a gentle, sweet-souled young boy who kisses his mother goodnight and fears for Richard's well-being. When compiling research for his costumes, I looked up 1900s children's fashion with an emphasis on rascally young boys. Figures 1.27 and 1.28 below are the two pieces of research that aided me the most during the design process. Both images depict boys in period appropriate play attire, with the magazine cover on the left showcasing a worn and tattered look and the photograph on the right a simple but neat and clean ensemble.



Figure 1.27: 1919 magazine cover of young boys



Figure 1.28: Child wearing average play attire

The actor cast as Tommy was actually a smaller-than-average college student, rather than a child, so one of the challenges of costuming the character



was making him resemble an 11-year old, not only in height, but also in build. I chose to give him a pair of shorts that would hit him slightly above the natural waist and end a few inches above the knee. This would make his torso and legs look shorter, and the effect was enhanced by combining the shorts with knee-high socks and boots that hit between ankle and mid-calf. Tucked into the shorts was a blue-striped, cotton collared shirt, which Essie would have selected in honor of the holiday. Tommy has unbuttoned the cuffs and rolled up the sleeves. The original design is pictured in Plate 1.14, and the stage-ready version in Figure 1.29. Very little changed between the two version other than the color of Tommy's wool shorts, which was changed to add color contrast on stage, and I added suspenders so that his shorts would fit properly.

Like the rest of his family, Tommy wouldn't be expected to dress up the day after a holiday, so for Act 3 I exchanged his long sleeved shirt for a short-sleeved, collarless cotton garment in a cream hue. This I paired with off-white and blue-striped knickerbockers, pale rose suspenders, and his footwear from the previous acts. The waistband, hems of both the trouser legs and sleeves, and taller boots cut his body horizontally, in the same fashion as the previous design, making him appear shorter with a truncated torso (See Plate 1.15). However, look did not make it to stage because once in life-size scale, the knickerbockers looked too much like baseball pants, due to their colors and the use of vertical stripes. Those stripes also served to elongate the leg, which was counterproductive to the design, so I chose exchanged the striped knickerbockers for a tan and cream plaid linen trouser of the same variety instead. The result is pictured in Figure 1.30.



Plate 1.14: Tommy and Mildred Miller, Acts 1 and 2





Figure 1.29: Production Photo of Tommy Miller, Act 1





Plate 1.15: Tommy, Mildred, and Arthur Miller, Act 3





Figure 1.30: Production photo of Tommy Miller, Act 3

### Lily Miller

Lily is Nat's spinster sister and a school teacher passing her summer vacation with the Miller family. She is hopelessly in love with Essie's brother, Sid, but cannot bring herself to marry him on the moral grounds of his drunkenness, and because several years ago she painfully broke off their engagement due to his involvement with prostitutes at a party. Throughout the following years he has repeatedly asked her to reconsider and she in turn has repeatedly refused, and thus is 'the old maid school-marm' by choice rather than circumstance. I wanted to embrace her choice and the fashion that accompanied it, so I limited my research to early 1900s school teachers and women at university. Luckily I was able to find photographs of such women, not only in an academic setting, but on vacation as well, and those images include Figures 1.31 and 1.32 below. Both images depict women in starched, neat apparel with masculine accents, such as neck and bow ties.



Figure 1.31: Ladies attending university

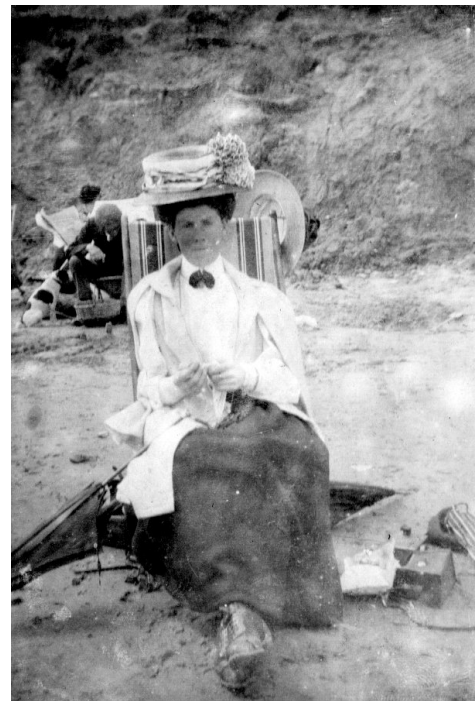


Figure 1.32: Woman vacationing at the beach

Although Lily and Essie are good friends, the women couldn't be more different. Unlike the Miller matriarch, Lily is utilitarian in her words and actions, never talking too much or changing her mind, and also unlike her friend finds solace in silence and deep thought, rather than fussing or complaining. She is guarded and, while capable of great compassion and nurturing, tends to approach the idea of love with a pragmatic, academic air. Because of this, I chose cool, calm blue as her signature color to contrast Essie's warm, sensual rose, and I coupled that with somber grey rather than light tan or beige in all her costumes. I also limited her fabrics to rougher textures, such as wool and cotton, and the silhouette of her garments to clean lines, with very little frill.

I wanted to present Lily as a school teacher resigned to a loveless life at the beginning of the play, so she would have somewhere to grow as the play develops and she gains hope of rekindling her long-dormant relationship with Sid. With this in mind I began Act 1 with her in a simple off-white cotton blouse and a grey and blue plaid wool skirt which added visual interest without being overly feminine or flirtatious. I did, however, give her a flounce at her throat to add some softness to her ensemble, since she is serious but not stern. Like Essie's parasol, Lilly's little blue fan was to cool her from the Connecticut heat while sitting on the porch, and added more color to her outfit. (See Plate 1.16). The stage-ready garment in Figure 1.34 exhibits very little change to the original design; the proper plaid fabric for the skirt could not be procured, so instead she wears a simple, grey wool skirt. Blue was brought into the costume by trimming the flounce at her neck with a double row of straight, blue ribbon.

This ensemble was worn throughout most of Acts 1 and 2 with very little change. At the end of Scene 1, Lily accompanies Essie and Sid on the automobile ride, donning a duster, a straw hat with a dusty-blue veil, gloves, and

a parasol. Refer to Figure 1.16 for the research for this costume and Plate 1.08 for the rendering. The production photo is displayed below in Figure 1.35.

In Scene 1 of the first Act, Sid offers to take Lily to see the fireworks after dinner. She is obviously very pleased at his invitation, although she has concerns as to whether he will be sober enough to do so after carousing with his friends. Even so, she arrives to the dinner table in Scene 2 wearing a new dress in honor of the upcoming date. I wanted this moment to be one of happy anticipation for Lily, and give her a dress that symbolized the hope and excitement she carries into the evening. I designed the dress in blue, without any of her customary grey, to give it a light and happy feel. The silhouette was inspired by a piece of research in Figure 1.33, which looked feminine and inviting without being flashy or seductive. It was important that the dress not diverge too far from Lily's sober, school-teacher attire. In the design, the neckline is still high, to maintain modesty, however, the 'v' shape reveals more throat than what we are accustomed to seeing on her. The sleeves are also shortened, covering only to the elbow so that the forearm is exposed. The sleeves are wider than her former look, gathering at the bands around her lower biceps so that they pouf out in a stylish and becoming fashion. The rest of the dress is fairly plain, with a pigeon-breasted blouse gathered into a thin band at the waist from which a full skirt falls to the floor. The added ruffle around the bottom of the skirt balances out the sleeves at the top, and further softens the look of the ensemble. I gave her no jewelry so as to not make her look too frivolous or 'done-up'. This design is presented in Plate 1.17.

The realized garment, which was built in the shop, mimicked the design with a few exceptions. It was built from a thin, blue, lightweight cotton, printed with a micro-plaid design. I decided that the original neck, though modest, strode too far from her established costume profile, so I revised my choice and



extended it to a high collar. The dress was also too plain and boring for stage, so a yoke was added to both the front and back of the bodice and trimmed with off-white lace to make it stand out. The same lace was used to trim the bottom of the sleeves. Finally, the blue fabric used for the dress was so muted in nature, that from the audience it was difficult to discern whether it was really blue or a pale grey, so I added a pastel blue belt at the waist which brought out the blue of the dress and achieved the desired effect. I also added a few pieces of jewelry to add further visual interest to the ensemble: a pair of small, white cameo earrings and a blue cameo on a blue ribbon. Since Lily continues to check the time in anticipation of Sid's arrival home, I also gave her a small silver pendant with a watch on the underneath that she wore on a silver chain around her neck. (See Figure 1.36).



Figure 1.33: Ladies in calico dresses

After Sid comes home drunk from spending time with friends at a picnic, thereby breaking his promise and unable to take her to the fireworks, Lilly is beside herself with misery and anger. She excuses herself from the dinner table after accusing everyone of enabling him, and by the time the family is waiting up that night for Richard in Act 2, she has changed back into her previous clothing. It is not in the script that she does so, but I wanted to visually symbolize that once the hope she carried for the evening was crushed, she wouldn't have wanted reminder of what could have been. She is also a practical woman and would have viewed sitting around the house in such attire inappropriate.

When the family appears all together for the last time at the beginning of Act 3, the night has passed, and all have had a chance to come to terms with their own trials. It is still early in the day, and although Lilly claimed to forgive Sid the night before, she is still hurt by his actions. With this in mind, I designed a costume that communicated both that she is an independent woman who doesn't feel she has to settle for a man who hurts her, even if she loves him, and that she has once again resigned herself to the life of an unmarried school teacher. Her look is very starched and crisp, with a long-sleeved off-white cotton blouse and cream lightweight-wool skirt, neither of which are adorned with ruffles or excess fabric. A darker grey belt cinches her waist and the only blue found on her person is a bow tie around her neck, which is more professional and masculine than dainty. There was hardly any change to this costume: The only difference in the design in Plate 1.18 and the produced costume in Figure 1.37 is the color of the belt which was changed to blue to match the tie and make a more cohesive look.



Plate 1.16: Lilly and Essie Miller, Acts 1 and 2





Figure 1.34: Production Photo of Lilly Miller, Act 1





Figure 1.35: Production Photo of Lilly Miller and Sid Davis, Act 1



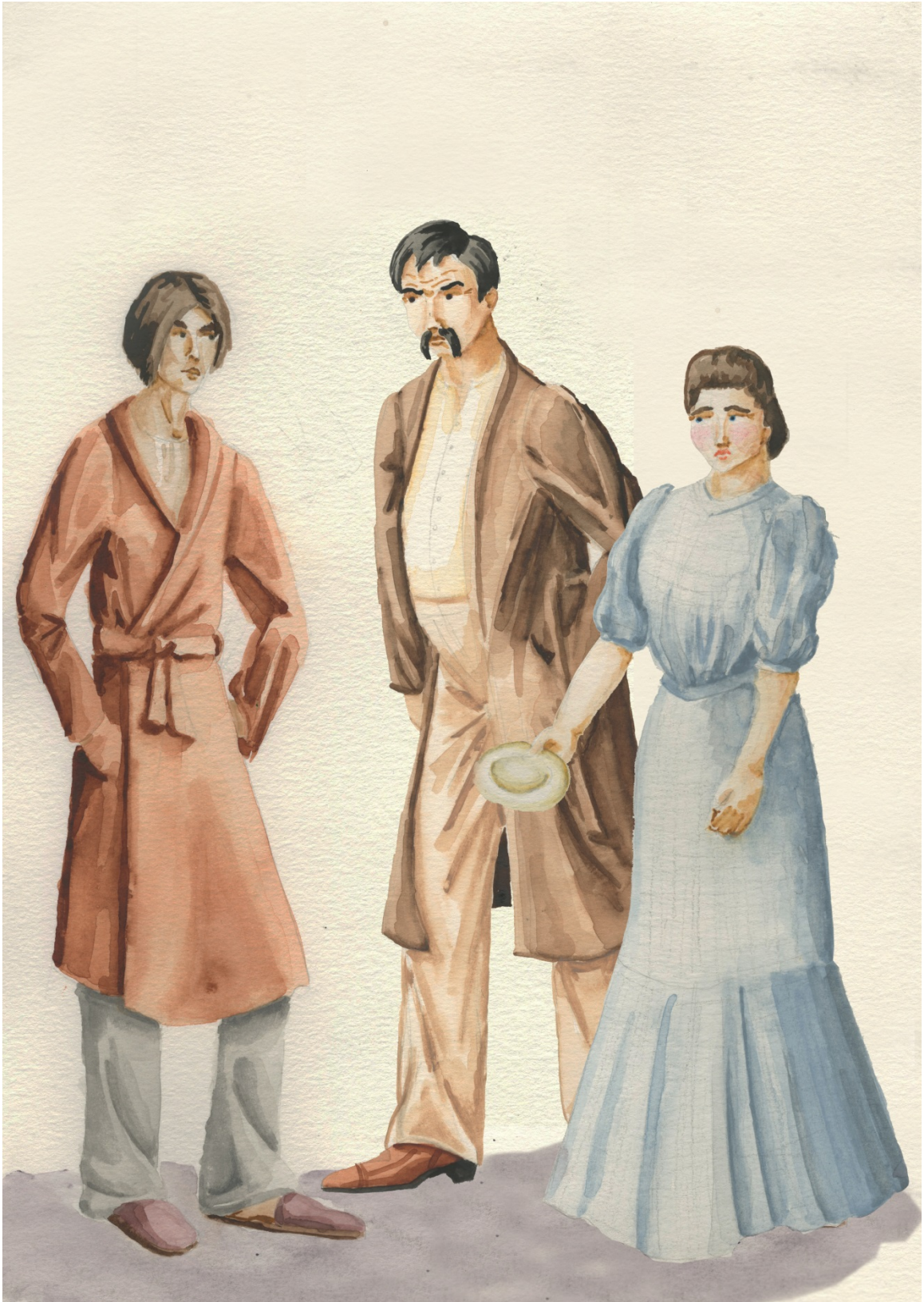


Plate 1.17: Lilly, Nat, and Richard Miller, Act 2





Figure 1.36: Production photo collage of Lilly Miller, Act 2



# *Ah, Wilderness!*

Act 3



Plate 1.18: Lilly Miller and Sid Davis, Act 3



Figure 1.37: Production photo of Lilly Miller, Act 3



### Sid Davis

Sid is Essie's brother, as well as a dreamer and a romantic. Unfortunately, he is also an undependable drunk. He cannot restrain himself from liquor, even though he knows it has cost him his most recent employment and the love of his life, Lily, who refuses to marry him because of his addiction and tendencies toward meeting 'bad women' at parties. He is a good-natured, humorous and gentle soul—even when intoxicated—and hates himself for his weaknesses. I wanted the costume to show a man who was sincere but tragically flawed, and with enough humor to laugh at himself for these traits. I started my research with bar scenes at the turn of the century, then broadened my search to vagabonds and period cartoons of drunks. The two images that aided the most in his design appear in Figures 1.38 and 1.39. The painting on the left influenced my color palette and the feelings I wanted to evoke for Sid and the photograph on the right influenced his silhouette and general lack of upkeep.



Figure 1.38: Painting of drunkards at a bar



Figure 1.39: Group of intoxicated men outside a bar



I reasoned that because Sid is unemployed and had to move home because he no longer had a way of supporting himself, he wouldn't have an extensive wardrobe. Therefore, he wears the same cotton shirt, wool trousers, suspenders, and shoes throughout the play, the only change being that is an added wool plaid vest in Acts 1 and 2 as a show of dressing up for the holiday, and a bowler when going on his picnic. (See Plate 1.19). During production, I added a tired, old sports jacket to his picnic ensemble, as it was a staple of early 20<sup>th</sup> century wardrobes and something he probably would not have gone without. He does not wear a tie; this is a man who knows who he is and doesn't bother with pretenses. This costume is located in Figure 1.41. The base costume is a mixture of all the colors used in the show's palette: blue, red, grey, and tan. Nothing matches, the pieces taken from different outfits and different stages of his life, and all look old and worn, though well loved. The majority of his clothing, once the vest is removed in act 3 (See Plate 1.20 and Figure 1.42), is blue and grey to tie him to visually to Lily. The actualized costume very nearly resembled the rendering except the scale of both the plaid on the vest and the stripes on the pants was too small to be seen from stage. It was important to me to get some blue in his ensemble to help tie him to his romantic interest, so I gave him a collarless cotton shirt with blue stripes, as observed in Figure 1.40.

The motoring scene, the research for which is located in Figure 1.40, called for automobile attire, including a duster, gloves, hat, and goggles. I designed them to be generic, something he either borrowed from Nat or had left at the Miller house in the past. I originally designed the duster without the added cape, but the only garment available to me included one; therefore, the stage costume does in fact include a small cape. The hat also changed from design to production, because the director and I didn't want the audience to associate the

originally rendered hat with planes and aviation. The final hat, a newsboy cap, along with the rest of the produced costume, is presented in Figure 1.43.



Figure 1.40: Two men in driving attire



Plate 1.19: Sid Davis and Nat Miller, Acts 1 and 2





Figure 1.41: Production Photo of Sid Davis, Act 1

# *Ah, Wilderness!*

Act 3



Plate 1.20: Sid Davis and Lilly Miller, Act 3





Figure 1.42: Production Photo of Sid Davis, Act 3





Figure 1.43: Production Photo of Sid Davis, Act 1

### Muriel McComber

Muriel is a naïve, fifteen-year-old, sheltered by her conservative parents and hopelessly in love with Richard. Despite being brave enough to sneak out after dark to meet him, she is still afraid of what her parents and society thinks about her feelings and actions. This, combined with the fact that she still lives under her mother and father's roof, led me to think that she would be dressed traditionally, in frilly, feminine clothes that were vaguely reminiscent of children's wear. I researched young girls and children of the Edwardian Era, and the Figures 1.44 and 1.45 are the two images that most informed my design in the areas of silhouette and girlish frivolity.



Figure 1.44: Portrait of a Young Lady



Figure 1.45: Two girls from the early 1900s

Although Muriel's letters are what drive Richard's action in the plot, she only appears once, in the second scene of Act 3. Since she is only visible for a short time, I needed to provide as informative a costume as possible. (See Plate 1.21). Pink, society's most feminine color, served as the main hue, on a background of cream, and visually linked her to Richard and his red hat. It also infused warmth and romance into the scene. The silhouette of the dress utilizes several frilly elements, such as fluffy sleeves, a lace yoke, and a multi-tiered, ruffled skirt to make her seem young and girlish. Her family is wealthy, and it makes sense she would have such elaborate apparel. The placement of her neckline and length of both her sleeve and skirt hems are modest, yet youthful, and her white boots are visible beneath her full skirt. Her hat is also trimmed with pink flowers and ribbon, completing her outfit and enhancing the sense of sweetness and youth I was striving for.

The finalized garment in Figure 1.46 holds true to color but varies somewhat in silhouette from the original design. This is because when pulling costumes, the base dress used—with its pattern of little pink roses against a cream background—fit the actress perfectly, and I could see it had a lot of potential to closely resemble my rendering. To make it better fit my vision, I added layers of off-white lace to the front of the cotton bodice to give it a pigeon-breasted look, and layered the same lace with another pink variety and different kinds of ribbon around the neck to create a yoke similar to the drawing. Pink and cream lace trim was then sewn to the sleeve cuffs and waistline of the bodice to add more visual appeal, and several layers of ruffles were added to the hem of the cotton skirt to evoke the same girlishness as my original drawing. It became apparent that the white boots were too stark, and the heel too high, and so they were replaced with brown boots with a smaller heel to make the actress shorter in relation to her romantic counterpart.





Plate 1.21: Muriel McComber and Richard Miller, Act 3





Figure 1.46: Production Photo of Muriel McComber, Act 3

### David McComber

Dave is a sour, conservative old man. He walks to the Miller's home on Independence Day morning to demand Nat physically punish Richard for copying radical poetry and giving it to his daughter, Muriel. He is also one of the town's wealthier citizens and threatens to take his advertisements out of Nat's paper if the Nat refuses. His old fashioned, prudish notions drive his actions and opinions, and would inform his dress. With this in mind, I researched businessmen and conservatives of the early 1900s. I used Figure 1.47 as a historical image upon which to base the overall silhouette of my design with accompanying accessories and 1.48 as a. evocative image of how McComber sees himself, a high-standing gentleman in the small society of his town.



Figure 1.47: Group of businessmen in the 1900s



Figure 1.48: Portrait of Henri Moser, 1900

Since grey is the dreariest and homeliest color in my palette, I chose to use it as McComber's primary color; however, even though the garments were sober, I took great effort to ensure they looked well-tailored and more expensive



than those of the Miller's. I chose an off-white linen dress shirt with a stiff, starched collar, layered under a wool plaid vest, pressed wool trousers, and a frock coat of light-weight wool. I also chose black shoes with spats and a black top hat to play up the fact that he has money and isn't afraid to show it. The most interesting pieces of his outfit are the little grey plaid bowtie at his throat and the plaid pattern of his vest, both of which I added so the audience would believe that he was prudent rather than dull. (See Plate 1.22). Changes that were made to the final costume included shortening the jacket to the customary business length, subtracting the gloves due to the July weather in Connecticut, and substituting a more 'contemporary' grey bowler hat for the old-fashioned top hat as seen in Figure 1.49.



Plate 1.22: David McComber, Wint Selby, and Nora, Act 1



Figure 1.49: Production Photo of David McComber, Act 1



## Nora

Nora is a young Irish maid and appears toward the end of Act 1 while setting up and serving the Miller's dinner. Unfortunately, she is both clumsy and absent minded, and Essie constantly corrects the poor girl. For research, I concentrated on maids and working women of the time. The house maid pictured in Figure 1.50 is starched and clean, the sort of maid that Essie would enjoy employing in her home. The washer woman in Figure 1.51 is the opposite: The rumpled and untidy lady with rolled-up sleeves and hair falling from its bun more closely resembles Nora's hard-working but coarse nature. I combined aspects from both images when designing the character.



Figure 1.50: Portrait of a house maid, 1909



Figure 1.51: Painting of washer-women, 1905

Nora's outfit needed to be simple above all else. I chose a brown cotton for her base blouse and skirt because of its connection to poverty and the working class. The high neck, long sleeves, and floor-length hem would ensure

the utmost modesty while still allowing her the movement required of her position, and the off-white cuffs (which would have been removable in the 1900s) would prove she could maintain a clean appearance while taking care of the house. I then layered on a cream linen apron, which, I imagine Essie would have provided so Nora could look respectable in her role. This design is presented in Plate 1.23 and the stage-ready costume in Figure 1.52. The differences between the two are the result of having to pull rather than construct her costume; my goal of simplicity was still attained, and the colors stayed fairly true to the original. Since our production also made Nora a religious Catholic (crossing herself in hopes Essie won't chide her work) I gave her a crucifix on a chain to wear around her neck which she used throughout the scene.



Plate 1.23: Nora, David McComber, and Wint Selby, Act 1





Figure 1.52: Production Photo of Nora, Act 1

### Wint Selby

Wint is Arthur's friend, and a fellow student at Yale. He is fast-talking and smooth, with a flare for the fast life of women and booze, and he is the one that gets Richard to go to the bar where he gets into trouble. Wint is not a bad guy though, and repeatedly asks the younger man if he's done such things before since he 'doesn't want to lead him astray'. Wanting to portray a young rascal on the chase for some fun, I researched Edwardian Era young men's fashion and focused on those who looked rascally or like ladies' men. The image that I used when designing Wint's outfit is below in Figure 1.53 which displays period accurate attire and exudes a libertine air similar to Wint's character.



Figure 1.53: Portrait of a young rascal

I chose to dress Wint in a cotton shirt, suede vest, tie, and wool trousers. I left out a jacket since one of any kind would have been too formal for a night of trouble, but kept the vest because a mere shirt and trousers wouldn't have had enough style. I then finished his look with a beige homburg hat. He appears on stage for less than ten minutes, right before the dinner scene, but provides a major turning point in the play and is Richard's contact to the shady world of the bar. I chose a muted shade of yellow for the vest and tie to set him apart from the blue and red hues of the family circle, and set him up as an introduction to the visuals to come in Act 2. The rest of his outfit conforms to the hues of the neutral color pallet of off-white and tan. Plate 1.24 depicts the original design, and Figure 1.54 shows the resulting costume.





Plate 1.24: Wint Selby, David McComber, and Nora, Act 1





Figure 1.54: Production photo of Wint Selby

## Belle

The script describes Belle as a “typical” and “cheap” “college tart” but fairly new to the business. She has not yet numbed herself to the shame of her profession, and seducing such a young and inexperienced boy as Richard makes her uneasy. It was important to the director that she not actually look like the stereotypical tart and suggested that I think of her as a working girl (i.e. factory worker, maid, shop girl, etc.) that is down on her luck and only began soliciting when she could find no other recourse. With this in mind, I researched various female professions at the turn of the century and their attire and decided Belle would come from secretarial work. Women of that occupation tended to have more interesting clothing that had the potential of being dressed up or down and I liked the idea of her having layers, such as a jacket, to shed onstage. Figures 1.55 and 1.56 specifically interested me because of the “business man” suit quality of the dresses: jackets and simple skirts over lacy blouses give the outfits a sense of professionalism and reserve which would contrast with Belle’s personality and occupation.



Figure 1.55: Fashion plate of working women



Figure 1.56: Woman wearing a suit



In the end I did give her a snug-fitting jacket that hugged her body and corresponded with a long skirt what was fitted throughout the waist and hips but gradually flared out into a wide circle. This ensured the body was covered and looked professional while also being sensuous. (See Plate 1.25). Under the jacket I designed an off-white, pigeon-breasted, high necked blouse. One of my rough sketches included a blouse with a lacy, see-through yoke, but Mr. Barnes was afraid it would make her look too much like a stereotypical tart. I limited the lace to her collar so that her throat would still be slightly bare. The light brown linen I envisioned for the ensemble is darker in color than the tan and beige hues I used for the Miller family, and the dusty purple accents of the lapels, belt and skirt trim take her further away from their world and add visual interest and sex appeal. I finished her ensemble with white cotton gloves, thigh-high silk stockings (since she raises her skirt to her hip), and warm brown shoes.

The ending costume was fairly close to the original design in silhouette and color, but several details were added to make the outfit more interesting. The linen used for the jacket and skirt was embroidered with flowers and vines in dusty yellows, browns, and greens, which tied Belle into the world of the bar. Because I couldn't find the correct trim for the skirt, purple linen cuffs were added to the sleeves so that the color remained prominent, and mid-calf brown boots made her legs even more an impact once she raised her skirt. I found a beautiful off-white blouse with the lace yoke, and once the director saw it under the modest covering of the jacket, he approved. To finish the ensemble, I gave her a beaded necklace, drop pearl earrings, and a little beaded purse. Figure 1.57 is a production photo of the finished costume.



Plate 1.25: Belle, Salesman, and Bartender, Act 2





Figure 1.57: Production photo of Belle, Act 2



## Bartender

George, the bartender, is a sarcastic and unscrupulous fellow who isn't above getting an underage boy intoxicated and then roughing him up a little while throwing him out of the bar. His place of work is practically a bed house for prostitutes to get their callers liquored up before they go upstairs, and he tries to help Belle by putting more alcohol than necessary in Richard's drink to loosen him up. When the boy gets drunk and starts making a fool of himself, George violently throws him out of the bar. For inspiration, I researched bars and bartenders at the turn of the century, and Figures 1.58 and 1.59 inspired the colors, patterns, and silhouette of my design.]



Figure 1.58: Early 1900s painting of a bar tender



Figure 1.59: Bar tender in a saloon, 1880s

I chose green as the Bartender's main color and used it liberally as the stripes of his collared shirt and his plaid cotton vest. Both of these items were common for men of that profession, as was the apron I layered over the top. Dark brown wool pants and shoes comprised the bottom of his ensemble, and the whole thing was finished off with a yellow tie which I added to insert variety of color. (See Plate 1.26). Figure 1.60 shows the stage-ready costume which translated from the design very well. The only large change was the type of apron he wore, which I altered so that more of his shirt and vest would show. The only other change was his tie, which I made green to bring out the green in his vest.



Plate 1.26: Bartender, Salesman, and Belle, Act 2





Figure 1.60: Production photo of the Bartender, Act 2

### Salesman

The script never divulges what the salesman sells, or if he is based in town or travels. He doesn't seem to recognize the bartender, and he and Belle appear to share a big-city view of the little town, so I assumed he was not stationed there. However, he knows of Nat Miller and the Globe newspaper, so he at least has visited in the past. I made the assumption he was a traveling salesman and that is what drove my research. The advertisement in Figure 1.61 was the only interesting image I could find that didn't look too similar to the Miller men, in that it consists of a matching three-piece suit, and I used that as the base of my design.



Figure 1.61: 1900s advertisement featuring a man in a three-piece wool suit

The salesman struck me as that breed of unscrupulous but not entirely amoral used car salesman that nowadays would turn back the mileage before selling a car but feel bad about it later and confess to his priest. I dressed him in a low-end three-piece suit, bowler, and bowtie. (See Plate 1.27). The entire outfit is meant to look cheap but not ugly, and the dark brown of the wool fits in to the shady, dirty feel of the scene. I decided his bowtie and bowler would be burnt-orange to rust in hue to add more color variation and keep within the bar's secondary color palette. The final costume in Figure 1.62 held true to the original design and fit well within the scene.





Plate 1.27: Salesman, Belle, and Bartender, Act 2





Figure 1.62: Production photo of the Salesman and Belle, Act 2

## Evaluation

This was my first opportunity to work on a show this large and with such a renowned director, and I was very pleased with the result. I wanted to create clothing as opposed to costumes, things real people would wear as extensions of themselves. I am happy to say that I received a compliment from an audience member stating just that. I also wanted to make a good impression on Paul Barnes and act as professional as possible in my position. I succeeded in this as well because at the end of the production, he said he would love to work with me again and agreed to write a discussion of my work for my portfolio.

I feel that I approached *Ah, Wilderness!* with excitement and a willingness to collaborate that made the project enjoyable for myself and those I worked with. I also felt there was good communication between myself and the director, and that we were able to clearly articulate our ideas and impressions. Louella Powell, the costume shop manager, and the ladies working on the show were wonderfully supportive, and with the aid of my designs and instructions we produced beautiful garments for the stage.

I am grateful that USU has strong relationships with both the Utah Festival Opera, Utah Shakespeare Festival, and Weber State University because the ability to pull from their storage made this show far more successful than if I had only had our storage to browse through. However, building costumes to my exact design requirements, and seeing my designs realized to their full potential was a thrill none can compare to. My favorite garment is Essie's Act 3 skirt, because I spent several hours sewing yarn to the bottom to make the Art Nouveau trim exactly the way I wanted. I do not have a least favorite garment because I felt every costume did exactly what it was supposed to do: give a visual representation of the character's being.



However, every show comes with its own set of complications, and this one was no different. I, at this point, still consider myself an amateur when it comes to clothing construction—especially when the garments to be made are draped rather than from a purchased pattern. This made buying the correct amount of fabric for projects difficult, and I invariably purchased too much for each. Thankfully I had a large budget that could afford such miscalculations, and the production didn't suffer. This was a learning moment for me, and I know now the basic amount of fabric individual garments require from the initial draping process through to the fashion fabric.

I also have a better understanding of how to work with fellow designers whose visions do not necessarily match my own. For this production, I had a hair and makeup designer to help realize the character's physical appearance, and she and I disagreed on several aspects of the design. At first, I gave her too much control because I didn't want to seem unreasonable; however, when it became apparent that our visions were not going to match up, I learned to hold my ground and assert my designs. This lesson will help me with future projects, as I know there will be times throughout my career that require diplomacy and confidence.

In the end I could not be more pleased with my designs for *Ah, Wilderness!*. The pride I felt opening night carried through till closing, and each time I saw the production I couldn't help but think of all the time and energy spent by everyone involved and how it was all worth it. I feel honored to have had the opportunity to work with such a distinguished director as Mr. Barnes and with an amazing team of designers.



Figure 1.63: Production photo of entire ensemble

## References

- An Afternoon Out*. 1910. Waterbury. Styles Matter. Web. 4 Oct. 2014.  
<<https://stylesmatters.wordpress.com/tag/women-dresses-1910/>>.
- At the Seaside*. 1906. Photographs 1906 'Mabel' Web. 4 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://story.theholdsworths.org.uk/album/a01/a1906mab.html>>.
- A Young Boy*. Lowercase. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://alettereminuscole.com/tag/laboratorio/page/2/>>.
- A Young Man*. 1910. Bomber Girl. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://25dollarvintage.blogspot.com/2011/07/brief-history-of-mens-shirts-from-1900.html>>.
- Blouse*. 1905. FIDM Museum. OMG That Dress! Web. 3 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://omgthatdress.tumblr.com/post/49256956636/blouse-1905-the-fidm-museum>>.
- DeCamp, Joseph Rodefer. *The Blue Cup*. 1909. Oil on Canvas. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia. *Museum of Fine Arts Boston*. Web. 4 Oct. 2014.
- Derby Hat Day*. 1907. Greenwich,. Etsy. Web. 4 Oct. 2014.  
<<https://www.etsy.com/listing/50890074/derby-hat-day-early-1900s-men-of-fashion>>.
- Emil Breitkreutz. 1905. University of Southern California Archives, Los Angeles. About USC. Comp. USC Communications. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
<<https://about.usc.edu/history/>>.
- Grigorescu, Nicolae. *Two Drunks*. Early 1900s. *Two Drunks*. WikiArt. Web. 2 Oct. 14. <<http://www.wikiart.org/en/nicolae-grigorescu/two-drunks>>.
- Leyendecker, J.C. *Vacation*. 1907. Oil on Canvas. American Illustrator's Gallery, New York. *Art and Artists*. Web. 5 Oct. 2014.  
<<http://poulwebb.blogspot.com/2015/03/j-c-leyendecker-part-1.html>>.
- Millinery Shopping in Paris*. 1905. Paris. *History If Women's Fashoion*. Web. 3 Oct. 2014. <<http://glamourdaze.com/history-of-womens-fashion/1900-to-1919>>.
- Orpan, William. *The Wash House*. 1905. The Artist's Estate. *National Gallery of Ireland*. Web. 4 Oct. 2014.  
<[http://www.shopcreator.com/mall/productpage.cfm/NationalGalleryofIreland/\\_sp6/-/The Wash House, William Orpen 1905. © the artist's estate.](http://www.shopcreator.com/mall/productpage.cfm/NationalGalleryofIreland/_sp6/-/The+Wash+House,+William+Orpen+1905.+©+the+artist's+estate.)>.
- Photograph of a Young Lady*. 1908. *1900-1919 Patterns and Images*. Web. 2 Oct. 2014. <<http://sensibility.com/vintageimages/1900s/>>.
- Picnic Group at Highfields*. 1900. QldPics, Sydnee. *Pictures of Australia*. Web. 3 Oct. 2014. <<http://www.bonzle.com/pictures-over-time/pictures-taken-in-1900/page-6/picture-6pvjf8u0/size-2/highfields/picnic-group-at-highfields-1900-1910>>.



Pirou, Eugene. *Henri Moser*. 1900. Bibliothèque Nationale De France, Paris. *Wikimedia Commons*. Web. 3 Oct. 2014.  
 <[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Exposition\\_universelle\\_de\\_1900\\_-\\_portraits\\_des\\_commissaires\\_généraux-Henri\\_Moser.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Exposition_universelle_de_1900_-_portraits_des_commissaires_généraux-Henri_Moser.jpg)>.

Rockwell, Norman. "The Catch." *Country Gentleman* 3 May 1919. Print.

Saloon. 1880s. Everett, Washington. *Buddies in the Saddle*. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
 <<http://buddiesinthesaddle.blogspot.com/2010/11/old-west-saloons.html>>.

Sambourne, Edward Linley. *Girls Walking Past*. The Royal Bourough of Kinsington and Chelsea. *The Library Time Machine*. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
 <<https://rbkclocalstudies.wordpress.com/category/edward-linley-sambourne/>>.

Sarony, Napoleon. *Oscar Wilde*. 1882. New York. *Oscar Wilde in America*. Web. 4 Oct. 2014. <<http://www.oscarwildeinamerica.org/sarony/sarony-photographs.html>>.

*Sincerely, Melba and Hazel*. 1910. Flickr. Web. 5 Oct. 2014.  
 <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/boobob92/3556795864/in/faves-glitteranddie/>>.

*Summer Eves*. 1906. *Studies from Life: Costume and Object Portraits*. Web. 3 Oct. 2014. <<http://timpphoto.com/gallery/studies-from-life-costume-and-object-portraits/>>.

*Three Female Students Wear Plugs*. 1900. *From Plugs to Bling: A History of Cal Student Fashion, Berkeley*. SFGATE. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
 <<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/History-of-Cal-student-fashions-on-display-3292767.php#photo-2440357>>.

*Tibooburra Men*. early 1900s. Tibooburra Hotel, Tiboobirra. *Tiboobirra Hotel-History*. Web. 5 Oct. 2014.  
 <<http://www.tibooburrahotel.com.au/history.html>>.

Tombsly, James. *At the Bar*. 1911. San Fransisco. *Fine Art America*. 23 May 2012. Web. 5 Oct. 2014.

*Two Young Girls*. early 1900s. *Faces of the Edwardian Era*. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
 <<http://facesoftheedwardianera.tumblr.com/post/130669021374/two-young-girls-early-1900s>>.

United Garment Workers of America. *Saturday Evening Post* Mar.-Apr. 1902. Print.

Van Schaick, Charles. *Four Good-Looking Boys Wearing Hats*. *Miss Magnolia Thunderpussy's Photos with the Charles Van Schaick*. Web. 2 Oct. 2014.  
 <<http://www.ipernity.com/tag/57114/keyword/736529>>.

William Lyon Mackenzie. 1908. *Famous and Outstanding McGregors*. Web. 3 Oct. 2014. <[http://hal\\_macgregor.tripod.com/gregor/famous.html](http://hal_macgregor.tripod.com/gregor/famous.html)>.

*Young Man Smoking. Love to Know.* Web. 5 Oct. 2014. <[http://mens-fashion.lovetoknow.com/1900's\\_Fashion](http://mens-fashion.lovetoknow.com/1900's_Fashion)>.

*1901 Fashion Plates.* 1901. The Bartos Collection, Prescott, AZ. The Barrington House Educational Center. *Barrington House*, 25 July 2012. Web. 5 Oct. 2014. <<http://www.bartoscollection.com/fpedwardianera.html>>.

## CHAPTER 2

### *NOISES OFF*

#### **Synopsis and Introduction to the Play**

*Noises Off* is a slamming-door farce written by Michael Frayn, that explores the world of live theatre, both from the audience's perspective and from backstage. It is comprised of nine characters including: a director, stage manager, technical director, and actors who are in the process of rehearsing and performing "Nothing On", another farce and the 'play within the play' being performed as a traveling show throughout England. Thus I had the double-duty of presenting the 'actors' as both themselves and as their characters in the meta-dramatical production of 'Nothing On'. *Noises Off* is written in three acts and takes place in front of and behind the set for 'Nothing On'.

This production of *Noises Off* was produced by the Lyric Repertory Company, located in Logan, Utah. It was directed by Jim Christian and stage managed by John Nehlich. Spencer Potter designed the set, and Bruce Duerden and Steven Piechocki designed lights and sound, respectively. My costume assistant was Stormie McClelland and Do'Nel Marie Ault served as costume shop manager.

#### **Concept**

I began work on the designs for *Noises Off* in February of 2015, although it would not be produced until June of that same year. This was because I knew renovations to the building in which the costume shop was housed would keep me from working in the space for several weeks leading up to the official start of the Lyric season. Furthermore, *Noises Off* was the smallest of the four shows scheduled for the repertory company and the first to open. With three other,



larger shows being designed and built in the same shop, the producing staff at Lyric and I thought it best to get the designs and the majority of the pulling accomplished ahead of time. Unfortunately the director, Jim Christian, a theatre professor and highly sought after professional in his field, was in the middle of producing another play out of town and traveling back and forth to New York to work. Thus, much of the original design process happened with little director input.

Upon reading the script I realized how important it was to divide the world of 'Nothing On' from the world of the thespians performing it; I needed a way to visually separate the play from 'stage-reality'. I began referring to each group as "the performance" and "the company". The simplest division, I decided, was one of time: I would set 'Nothing On', or the performance, in a different time period than the one in which the company was living in. After careful consideration, I decided that the company should be contemporary. Everything that happens amongst the company members would be possible, if not probable, in the theatre today, and by creating a modern look, I would let the audience feel as if they were actually privy to some backstage debauchery. The performance was tougher to nail down, although there were some hints in the script such as allusions to corded telephones and new, color televisions. I finally nailed the period to the late sixties, specifically 1967, because of the sexiness, experimentation, and social freedom associated with the era. 'Nothing On' is a sexy, bedroom farce, and I thought the Carnaby Street outrageousness of my chosen era would keep the tone light and fun without becoming too raunchy.

## Research and Design

### Garry

Garry is a strong, confident actor who is almost always the first to voice an opinion about any given situation. His character, Tramplemain, in 'Nothing On' drives a majority of the action in 'the performance'. I wanted to visually emphasize these traits and dressed him in red, a power color, and played up bold patterns in both his shirt and tie. Because red is such a striking color, I specifically chose fainter, more subdued hues such as white and beige for the rest of his garments. The silhouette of his ensemble (made up of a jacket, dress shirt, pressed trousers, and tie) was inspired by Tramplemain's occupation as a realtor; the research for the costume is pictured in Figure 2.01. Polyester comprised most of his garments, the only exception being his cotton dress shirt. Normally I would shy away from the synthetic fabric for the stage, but since it was a staple of the 1960s and much of the outfit was pulled, I felt its presence was not only acceptable but necessary. The rendering for this costume is presented in Plate 2.01 below.

The actor who played Gary, Stefan Espinosa, took several hard and lengthy falls throughout the performance; At one point even completing a somersault-like tumble down the stairs. It became apparent then that I would need to purchase several pairs of identical trousers in case of damage, which turned out to be a wise choice as nearly each performance ended with a busted seam or ripped knee. His jacket and pants were also chosen to be larger than what he would normally wear to accommodate all this vigorous movement. At the same time I began looking for padding for the actor so that Stefan would be protected against injury while performing these stunts. After careful consideration and a lengthy discussion with both stage manager and actor, it was decided that padding be confined to knee pads and a slightly padded under-armor shirt that

could be worn under the costume, a production photo of which is located in Figure 2.02.



Figure 2.01: Men in business suits





Plate 2.01: Garry as Tramplemain



Figure 2.02: Production photo of Garry as Tramplemain

### Brooke

Brooke Ashton is a vapid, unintelligent actress who spends more time daydreaming than acting, and who cannot budge from the script even to cover for accidents on stage. Her character, Vicki, who is employed by Inland Revenue and is having an affair with Tramplemain, is undeniably sexy and assertive. I chose to give her the iconic 1960s Mod silhouette (See Figure 2.03) which was been both fashionable and sexy. I was able to pull a vintage pink and orange geometric patterned dress with a flower print from stock in which fell in line with the bright color palette of 'Nothing On'. In order to fit it better to the actresses measurements and to visually tie Vicki to Tramplemain, I added red georgettes and matching racing stripes to both sides seams and straps of the original dress. I also bought red floral-patterned fishnet hose to coordinate with the red racing stripes in the dress and better connect her ensemble to the red of Tramplemain's jacket, as evident in Plate 2.02. The actress who played Brooke and Vicki, Kelly McGaw, is a striking 6'2" woman and towers over all the other actors on stage. I used her height to add humor to the play: I put her in high-heeled gogo boots and designed a wig with plenty of volume to make her seem even taller than she already is.

Vicki spends much of the course of "Nothing On" in her underwear, and must be able to run, leap, and crawl on stage in that attire. I had originally thought to design a simple but pretty bra and matching panties set (research for such is located in Figure 2.04), but once I learned Kelly was cast in the role, I redesigned the ensemble. Because she is so tall, there is more skin that would show around such skimpy garments, and I thought the highly religious social climate of Logan, UT and the Lyric's older target audience might not react well. Instead, I pulled a lace long-line bustier and short, slitted slip to wear over matching spanx. I dyed all the pieces bright pink to mimick the pink in her Mod



dress and had her keep on her red fishnets and white go-go boots. The look was still sexy and obviously underclothes, without being too revealing. Production photos of both the mod dress and lingerie are exhibited in Figures 2.05 and 2.06, respectively.

While watching designer run, I realized how much the mod dress was utilized as a prop once Vicki removes it. Beyond the abuse required in the script, it was slammed in doors, kicked off balconies, and thrown into the air. Since the dress was vintage, and we only had one to last the entire run of the show, I set about getting another to use as the prop in these situations. Because the original dress was purchased in the 60s, and they no longer make it or the fabric from which it was sewn, I took a picture of a section of the skirt with my phone and uploaded it to Photoshop. Once there I color-corrected the photograph, and changed the scale of the pattern before downloading it to the website, Spoonflower. This website allows you to design your own fabric or paper and have it printed on whatever fiber and weight of fabric you want from their stock. Once the yardage was delivered, I had my assistant make a pattern from the original dress and then make a second from the new fabric. I used fabric markers to paint on the floral decoration that I had not captured in the original picture. Side by side there was a noticeable difference in color and pattern scale between the original and the constructed garment, but since the dresses were never on stage at the same time, and both were under stage lights which altered the colors of both dresses substantially, the audience couldn't tell the difference.



Figure 2.03: Collage of 1960s and 60s vintage inspired mod fashion



Figure 2.04: Women in their underclothes



Plate 2.02: Brooke as Vickie





Figure 2.05: Production photo of Brooke as Vickie in her mod dress





Figure 2.06: Production Photo of Brooke as Vickie in her lingerie

## Freddy

Freddy is a self-conscious actor who is quick to take blame for any mistake and gets nosebleeds at the first sign of violence. He plays Philip in 'Nothing On', a mishap-prone, unlucky man who is on the run from Inland Revenue. Philip and his wife are a well-to-do couple in the middle of an extended vacation in Spain to avoid paying taxes, so I researched preppy male fashions of the late 60s and found inspiration from the photo displayed in Figure 2.07. I wanted him to look gawky and uncomfortable, so I chose a cotton, v-necked vest that was a little too big and sagged in the front to make him look like he was slightly out of shape. This he wore over a long-sleeved, button-up cotton shirt and polyester trousers which were faintly too short. I wanted Phillip to differ drastically from Tramplemain so that the audience would clearly understand who was who in the fast-paced hubbub of the production, and chose to do so mainly with the element of color. While Tramplemain is in warm colors, I wanted Phillip in cooler colors. I chose turquoise for the shirt and off-white for the trousers. The vest I dyed a bright yellow which, although not a cool color, contrasted with and helped balance his Tramplemain's red jacket. I used fabric markers to apply a geometric design on the front of the vest, the uniformity of which contrasted with the wild, floral design worn by Tramplemain (see Plate 2.03). I originally designed this pattern as horizontal stripes to match those in his wife's shirt (which will be discussed shortly). However, when her blouse changed, I opted to mimic the new pattern in his vest so as to continue to visually tie them together. A powder blue sports jacket was later added in the dress-rehearsal process to further tie him to his wife in her suit. This completed ensemble can be found in Figure 2.08.

There are moments in all three Acts where Philip's trousers fall to the floor to expose his underwear. I chose turquoise boxers to match the rest of his ensemble and so that there would be as much color on stage as possible. I also



had to rig his pants to fall down without much exertion on the part of the actor. We did this by sewing heavy washers into the pockets of the trousers, which couldn't be seen from stage, but would make the trousers heavy enough to fall when the zipper was undone. There is also a scene in which Phillip comes onstage after spilling acid on his trousers which is eating holes through them and what lies beneath. I therefore bought two pairs of the same pair of trousers and burnt large holes in the crotch area of one pair with a lighter. Because they were constructed of polyester and not cotton or wool, they successfully melted rather than burned so that the holes looked acid eaten.

During the commotion of 'Nothing On' Philip gets wrapped up in sheets and a bathmat and is mistaken for a visiting Sheikh. Props was responsible for the sheets, but I designed and constructed the fake burnous from a black, pile bathmat and a white belt from a terrycloth robe. Later, when Freddy plays the real Sheikh, I found a white thawb (Middle Eastern robe) that was similar in color to the sheets used previously and had draped sleeves which mimicked the draping of the sheets on the body. I constructed the real burnous to match the fake one, but used black linen in place of the bathmat and a white ribbon, rather than a belt, to serve as the band. This way it made sense when the characters in 'Nothing On' mistook the real Sheikh for Philip. Figure 2.09 shows the production photo of Freddy in this ensemble.



Figure 2.07: Preppy man in a sweater



Plate 2.03: Freddy as Phillip





Figure 2.08: Production photo of Freddy and Phillip



Figure 2.09 Production photo of Freddy as the Sheikh

## Belinda

Belinda is the most professional and optimistic of all the actors performing 'Nothing On.' She is incredibly observant and for the most part, does her best to keep her fellow company members on an even keel. Her character in 'Nothing On,' Flavia, is Phillip's wife and a wealthy, level-headed woman. Again I wanted to visually separate Brooke and Flavia and match them to their respective male counterparts, so I gave Flavia a completely different silhouette from Vicki. The majority of her ensemble was made up a sea-foam green, cotton/polyester mix tweed pencil skirt and matching jacket, common during the mid-60s (see Figure 2.10).

I originally designed and pulled a polyester, knit sweater-vest to be worn under the jacket that sported a pattern of colorful horizontal stripes. The horizontal stripes evoke stability and groundedness, and the colors—pink, blue, green, orange, and brown—linked her to everyone else in the show. I thought this look, pictured in Plate 2.04, was appropriate as Belinda is the glue that holds the company together. However, the actress playing the role did not feel comfortable in the top, so I constructed a new one using calico cotton that had the variety of colors I wanted but in a pattern that she would find more flattering. I also added a bright yellow yoke to the new blouse to mimic the bright yellow of her husband's vest. The ensemble was completed with stockings and white pumps and is visible in Figure 2.11.





Figure 2.10: Three women in 1960s wool suits



Plate 2.04: Belinda as Flavia





Figure 2.11: Production photo of Belinda as Flavia



## Dotty

Dotty is the most invested in the success of the 'Nothing On' tour since she has money in the show, yet her actions continually threaten to derail it entirely. Her biggest problem is her inability to keep her hands off her male co-stars, even though they are decades younger than herself. Within the production of 'Nothing On' she plays Mrs. Clacket, the absent-minded housekeeper. In order to visually symbolize the confusion in both Clacket's and Dotty's minds, I chose to layer her costume in mismatched colors, patterns, and fabrics. The base for Dotty's costume is a bright pink, cotton house dress worn under a green-striped polyester sweater. Layered on top of everything was tied a floral yellow, full wrap around apron. I styled a grey wig in a disheveled fashion and wrapped a tiffany blue handkerchief around it. The look was polished off with sagging stockings and bright pink house slippers. Her completed silhouette is similar to an English housewife (see Figure 2.12), and I incorporated makeup inspired by Mrs. Slocombe from the 1960's British Sitcom *Are You Being Served* (see Figure 2.13). The rendering for Dotty is below in Plate 2.05 followed by the production photo in Figure 2.14.



Figure 2.12: Wrap around apron



Figure 2.13: Mrs. Slocombe



Plate 2.05: Dotty as Mrs. Clacket





Figure 2.14: Production photo of Dotty as Mrs. Clacket



### Selsdon

Selsdon is an aged, alcoholic, but gentlemanly actor portraying the Burglar in 'Nothing On.' His sweet but befuddled personality is stereotypical of the elderly English gentleman. Since he has very little stage time as the Burglar and is more often seen as a member of the company, I decided against the over-used comedic burglar costume in favor of one that would better represent his personality. I designed an ensemble consisting of an orange button-up shirt, tan trousers held up by yellow suspenders, and a black sports jacket. Besides the bright colors, it is an outfit that might be seen on any elderly gentleman sipping stout or ale in a pub, telling stories of his golden days (See Figure 2.15). We discover at the end of act 1 that the Burglar is actually Vicki's long lost father, and the orange in his shirt and that in her dress visually symbolizes that relationship. The rendering for this costume is located in Plate 2.06.

When it came time for Selsdon to become the burglar, I added a black newsboy hat and gloves, and raccoon mask. This, in combination with his black jacket, made him dark and mysterious enough to be a successful burglar, as seen in Figure 2.16. Furthermore, relegating the 'burglar gear' to a black jacket, hat, gloves, and mask meant that both Lloyd and Tim could get into and out of the gear easily when covering for Selsdon in Acts 2 and 3. I will address these costume changes below.



Figure 2.15: Elderly gentlemen in sports coats



Plate 2.06: Selsdon as the Burglar





Figure 2.16: Production photo of Selsdon as the Burglar

### Lloyd Dallas

Lloyd is the overworked and narcissistic director of 'Nothing On,' who can't seem to manage his cast. He repeatedly refers to himself as 'God' and has affairs with both Brook and Poppy. I chose to dress him in relaxed but stylish clothing throughout the play; made up of button-up, long-sleeved shirts and sleek outerwear. For inspiration I researched the famous contemporary actors and designers shown in Figures 2.17 and 2.18. In the spirit of keeping the crew of 'Nothing On' separate from the actors/character, I chose darker, heavily saturated primary colors for Lloyd's palette and accented it with black and grey.

In Act 1, the cast and crew has been rehearsing late into the night in order to open the next day. Lloyd's attire, although crisp and neat when put on that morning, has wilted and become less impressive as the evening has progressed. When he is introduced to the audience, he is wearing a slightly wrinkled, cotton, royal-blue shirt underneath a heather-grey cotton cardigan which has started to lose its shape from extended wear. His stylishly distressed denim jeans and expensive sneakers, complete the bottom portion of his ensemble while a blue/white/grey plaid tie hangs, undone around his neck. The pieces, while of high style and quality, have been no match for the stress of the evening.

In Act 2, Lloyd has returned to the company a month into their tour, to escape the problems he is facing while directing another show and to seduce Brooke into staying with 'Nothing On' until the end of the tour. Since he enters bearing whiskey and with romance on his mind, I designed him looking his best in a fancy wool/polyester blend suit. The suit itself is a reserved, dark grey pinstripe, which allows the virile red of the cotton shirt to be more prominent. I chose red for this scene, not only as a foreshadowing of the passionate encounter he has in mind, but because Act 2 is rather violent: And since there was no way to change the company's actors' costumes for this one scene, I used

Lloyd's clothing to reflect the overall ambience of the act. The renderings for his Act 1 and 2 costumes are displayed in Plate 2.07.

We see very little of Lloyd in Act 3, as he doesn't make his entrance until the end, when he is covering for Selsdon as the Burglar. By that time everyone involved with the performance of 'Nothing On' is on their last nerve and the show is on the verge of total collapse. I therefore recycled part of his costume from Act 1, which the wardrobe crew had been instructed to wrinkle during the preceding Act. This included his blue shirt, jeans, and sneakers. On top of this he wore the burglar gear consisting of black jacket, newsboy cap, gloves, and mask. According to dialogue earlier in the script, all these parts had been previously ordered for Poppy; therefore, I took in the jacket at the sides so that it would not button and shortened the sleeves to three-quarter length. It was important that the mask and hat stay on during the chaos of the ending scene, so I left those to dimensions that fit the actor playing Lloyds's measurements. Production photos for each of the three costumes are presented below in Figures 2.19 through 2.21.





Figure 2.17: Famous actor, Daniel Craig



Figure 2.18: Famous actor/director, Kenneth Branagh



Plate 2.07: Lloyd, Acts 1 and 2



Figure 2.19: Production photo of Lloyd, Act 1





Figure 2.20: Production photo of Lloyd, Act 2



Figure 2.21: Production photo of Lloyd, Act 3

## Poppy

Poppy is the stage manager of the company performing ‘Nothing On.’ While enthusiastic and willing, she is also sadly disorganized and lacks tact. While meeting with Christian for the first time, he described her as being a “hot mess,” and it is this, coupled with her sweetness, that I desired to portray. I chose to rely on memories and observations of stage managers I have worked with personally to supply the inspiration for her costumes; however, I acquired the images in Figures 2.22 and 2.23 for specific ideas as to colors and style. I wanted to give her a signature color, different from those worn by the cast, and bright enough to stand out when she was in her stage-management blacks during the run of the show. I chose turquoise because it puts her in the same world as Lloyd, with whom she is in love and—as the audience discovers—with whom has become pregnant. The presence and absence of the color also symbolizes her optimism and frame of mind as she sports it less and less as the play progresses.

In Act 1, she is still enjoying her stressful, but rewarding, job and working with Lloyd, and—since they are still rehearsing and not in a performance—she wears bright, happy (if not a little sloppy) attire. The straps of a black sports bra are plainly visible underneath the spaghetti straps of a turquoise camisole and a white and turquoise baby-doll blouse. The rounded, flower-like geometric pattern of the cotton blouse is both pretty and feminine, as is the Empire silhouette though the shirt is wrinkled and needs to be ironed. For trousers, I chose dark wash, low-rise flared jeans and Mary-Jane shoes. The actor playing Poppy, Lacy Dunn, has thick, curly hair that I instructed be let down and mussed, as if she has been running her fingers through it frantically since rehearsal began.

Sadness has come to Poppy in the months that the show has been touring between Acts 1 and 2: Along with several catastrophes related to the tour, she



has discovered Lloyd has been having sexual relations with Brooke and that Poppy is pregnant with his child. Because of this, and the fact that she must be as inconspicuous as possible back stage, her clothes have become more somber and dark. The same turquoise camisole from the previous act can be seen peeking out from the front of a black cotton zip-up hoodie. I wanted to maintain some femininity into her ensemble to remind the audience how sweet she is, especially since much of her dialogue is admonishing at her cast and crew, so I purchased a cotton, three-tiered, flounced miniskirt to complete her outfit. Her haphazard locks have been pulled back into a bun, and I discussed with Lacy and the director the humor of having her use a pencil and stick it in her hair repeatedly so that by the end of the Act she had a halo of yellow pencils.

There is a scene in Act 2 where Lloyd tries undressing Poppyr to get her into Brooke's costume and is successful at removing her skirt. After careful consideration and trial and error, I altered the skirt by adding a separating zipper found most commonly on hoodies. This way the actors playing Poppy and Lloyd could 'struggle' with the closure and then unzip it all the way, after which the skirt would come completely apart and fall to the ground. I had originally designed polka-dot leggings with this sequence in mind, so that Poppy could maintain a level of modesty; however, the director and I thought it would be more humorous if the divestment left Poppy in her underwear. I chose white "granny panties" for humorous effect. The rendering for these costumes is located in Plate 2.08.

Poppy is on stage for a matter of seconds at the end of act 3, but by this time she has been completely demoralized by the production and situations surrounding it. For this short appearance I put her in a mixed fiber black tunic sweater with stylized holes in the sleeves and recycled her jeans from Act 1. No other colors are evident in her ensemble, and all hints at flirtatiousness are absent. The audience only gets a second to take in the outfit before she is

wrapped in a white sheet and presented as 'the bride' at the end of the final, horrible performance of 'Nothing On'. Figures 2.24 through 2.26 display production photos of Poppy's costumes.



Figure 2.22: Professional stage manager

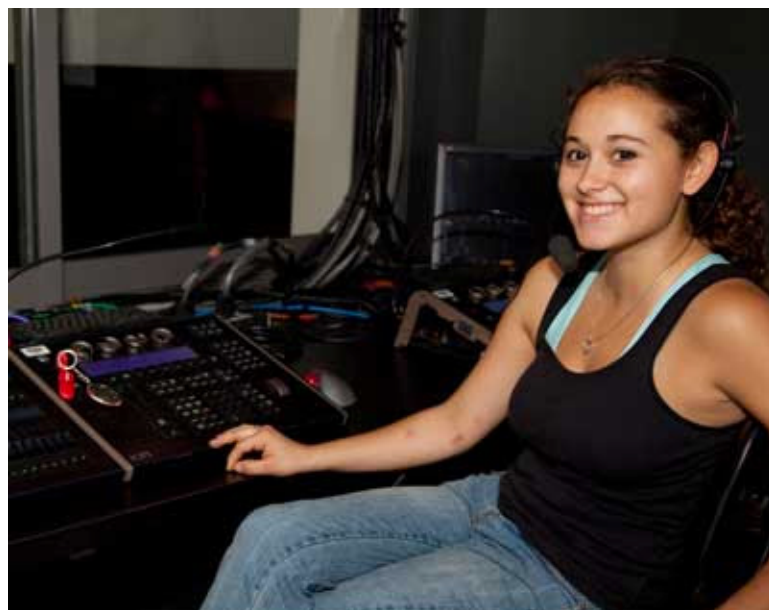


Figure 2.23: Amateur lighting designer



Plate 2.08: Poppy, acts 1 and 2





Figure 2.24: Production photo of Poppy, Act 1





Figure 2.25: Production photo of Poppy, Act 2



Figure 2.26: Production photo of Poppy, Act 3



## Timothy

Timothy (Tim) is the assistant stage manager for the production of 'Nothing On' and the only tech crew that appears. Because of this he spends most of the Act 1 either fixing the set or catching up on some much needed sleep. Throughout the other two acts, he comes between warring cast members, breaks down doors with an axe, serves as Lloyd's "gofer," and covers for actors on stage. As I spoke with the actor playing Tim about his role, Kris Klinger, I realized part of the humor he intended to inject into his character was that he would be doing all these amazing feats while being completely stoned. I therefore drew inspiration for his costumes from past colleagues who I knew to also self-medicate during stressful productions. Figures 2.27 and 2.28 are images similar to the styles I remembered of these colleagues.

Tim's basic silhouette is one of slovenly utilitarianism: whatever gets the job done and is comfy. In Act 1 it consists of a long-sleeved black undershirt and green T-shirt. As with Poppy, I wanted him to have some color to make him visually interesting without deviating too far from the traditional techie-blacks, and the green of the shirt was the perfect 'pop' the outfit needed. I added some humor by choosing a shirt with an O'Neill sportswear logo on the front as a nod to the playwright Eugene O'Neil. The lower half of the ensemble consisted of dark-wash jeans and black high-top Converse. Both shirts are too small, as if the munchies are really starting to take their toll, and the jeans, despite being baggy, are just shy of being long enough in order to make him look taller than he is and to show off his sneakers. His outfit is completed by two surfer necklaces and a skull and crossbones wallet on a chain.

Act 2 finds Tim half way through the tour of 'Nothing On', and he—along with everyone else—is having trouble keeping up an optimistic attitude. I forwent any real color in his costume for this act. Instead, he wore a too-big, long-

sleeved, cotton, crew-necked shirt with white letters exclaiming 'I <3 NY' and a white graphic of the city streets. I chose this shirt as an ode to an earlier version of the script in which Tim was a visiting American. (The original design substituted a simple black polo for the graphic tee.) He also leaves the theatre to run errands for Lloyd in this Act, and since it appears to be raining outside, I gave him a black rain jacket. This he wears over the same jeans, necklaces, wallet, and sneakers from Act 1 (see Plate 2.09).

Tim seems to bounce back in Act 3, joking with the audience in a before-curtain announcement, and looking forward to the last evening of the performance. I dressed him in a grey t-shirt with bright neon lettering, worn under a black, rayon sports sweater and his ever-present jeans and converse. This is also the Act in which he does most of the covering for actors, and I took the opportunity to add some humorous costume exchanges. For example, when Freddy falls down the stairs and hits his head, I instructed Gordon Dunn, the actor playing Freddy, to give his blue jacket to Kris so that Tim could come on stage as 'Freddy'. The jacket didn't fit him at all, and the blue was so stark against all his black and grey that the audience began laughing even before he said a line. He also comes in as one of the Burglars, with Lloyd and Selsdon, and therefore had his own set of burglar gear to layer on top of everything else.

Figures 2.29 through 2.31 show production photos of Timothy's Act 1, 2, and 3 costumes.



Figure 2.27: Professional stage technician



Figure 2.28: American stage technician





Plate 2.09: Timothy, acts 1 and 2



Figure 2.29: Production photo of Timothy, Act 1





Figure 2.30: Production photo of Timothy, Act 2





Figure 2.31: Production photo of Timothy, Act 3

## Evaluation

Overall I was very pleased with the success of this show and my contribution to that success. I feel I produced a well conceived design that supported the script, direction, and action of the play. Mostly, I am proud that I did this, only my second costume design, virtually alone, and collaborated in a way that I, my director, the actors, and my crew were pleased with the end result.

I ran into a few stumbling blocks along the way: I originally had an older version of the script that I used to design the show from, so costume changes and entire costumes were different or add/cut completely. I also had a difficult time contacting Jim Christian, since he was so busy, and not being able to communicate with my director in the early stages of the game was stressful. Further on into rehearsals I was met with resistance from two actors who refused to wear their rehearsal costumes and, in one case, their actual costume. However, in every one of these instances I was able to adapt or compromise to solve the problem.

I enjoyed my time with the Lyric Rep Company and look forward to working with them again.





Figure 2.32: Production photo of entire ensemble



## References

- A Practical Pinafore*. 1940s. *Vintage Patterns and Making*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <<http://vintagevisage.typepad.com/my-blog/recycling/>>.
- Are You Being Served? Series Three*. Dir. David Croft. Perf. Mollie Sugden, Trevor Bannister, and Wendy Richard. BBC1, 1972.
- Daniel Craig*. 2012. New York. *Bond Lifestyle*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.jamesbondlifestyle.com/clothing/>>.
- Hammot, Carolyn. *Old Men in Caprarola*. 1972. Carolyn Hammot, Caprarola. *Old Men*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.pbase.com/image/30107080>>.
- Legs and Co. Dancers*. 1948. Pan's People. *Pan's People*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.panspeople.com/?q=node/172>>.
- Liz Albright (Lighting Intern)*. 2009. Williams Town Theatre Festival, Williams Town. *Within the Festival*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://williamstowntheatrefestival.blogspot.com/2009/08/behind-scenes-technical-staffintern.html>>.
- Medic, Lara. Fashion Trends in the 1960s. 1960s. *Club Fashionista*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <<http://clubfashionista.blogspot.com/2014/08/most-memorable-fashion-trends.html#>>.
- Rachael Miller*. 2010. London. *LinkedIn*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rachael-miller-ba307870>>.
- Radish, Christina. *Kenneth Branagh*. 2012. Las Angeles. *Collider*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://collider.com/kenneth-branagh-jack-ryan-interview/>>.
- Rijn, Frans Van*. Joris Kijkt: Frans Van Rijn. 2011. Photographer's Collection, Russia. *Joris Vav Alphen Photography*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://jorisvanalphen.com/blog/joris-kijkt-frans-van-rijn/>>.
- Robin (LX Technician)*. 2015. Belgrade Theatre Coventry, Belgrade. *Work Experience Week 2015*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.belgrade.co.uk/news-and-blogs/blogs/its-work-experience-week-a-day-in-the-life-of-an-l/>>.
- Vintage 1970s Suits*. Dress That Man. *Pimp Ya Hide*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <[http://dressthatman.blogspot.com/2012\\_07\\_01\\_archive.html](http://dressthatman.blogspot.com/2012_07_01_archive.html)>.
- 1960s Advertisement*. *Stylish Wife*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.stylishwife.com/2013/09/fashion-in-the-1960s.html>>.
- 1960s Fashion*. *Fashion Pictures*. Web. 5 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.fashion-pictures.com/1963-66/img.php?p=7&img=1964-1-re-0021.jpg>>.

## CHAPTER 3

### *A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD*

#### **Synopsis and Introduction to the Play**

*A Year with Frog and Toad* is a TYA musical based on the beloved children's book series by Arnold Lobel. Along with various birds, mice, reptiles, and moles, Frog and Toad spend the year learning about fun, hardship, and the lasting bond of friendship. Their antics and adventures encompass two acts and range from an introduction to bullying, as the whole pond gathers to gawk at Toad's bathing suit during "Get a Load a Toad", to finding self-confidence with their friend Snail as he sashay's through "I'm Coming Out of my Shell," and finally to a warm, cozy conclusion; celebrating the end of their year-long journey in "Merry Almost Christmas."

This production of *A Year with Frog and Toad* was produced at USU's Lyric Theatre in Logan, Utah. It was directed by Dr. A. Bryan Humphrey, and stage managed by Ashley Crystal. Members of the design team included Trevor Flocco (set), Bruce Duerden and Tanner Funk (lights), and Jason Hardell (sound).

#### **Concept**

Director Humphrey's first word to the design team was "fun," and we agreed. We all wanted a show that would be lively and whimsical for its young audience, and one that was as enjoyable to produce as it was to see.

Delving further into my role as costume designer and how my designs would contribute to the production, Dr. Humphrey and I discussed the human traits of the animals; their emotions, actions, and dialog with each other make the stories—no matter how outlandish—accessible to the audience. It was therefore

important to me that the characters seemed just as human as they were animal, and I accomplished this by adapting familiar human clothing into shapes, silhouettes, textures, and colors that evoked specific and recognizable animal characteristics. Early on in the collaborative process Dr. Humphrey suggested that the design team look to vaudeville for inspiration, as he interpreted the story as separate, small acts that entered and exited in a vaudevillian way, rather than as a plot with a continuous through-line. While this concept was eventually discarded, I found that the early twentieth-century research I had gathered, specifically those fashions of the 1920s and 30s, held silhouettes and pieces that could easily be manipulated to fit within my revised concept. Thus, it was with those images that I began the design process.

Because the Frog and Toad stories are so iconic and beloved by our audience and their parents, I also took much inspiration from the illustrations in the books themselves. (See Figures 3.01 and 3.02) I originally thought that I could use the illustrations for color inspiration; however, with many of the books being painted in only shades of green and orange, I decided that the color scheme would be confined to the two title characters. I also used the illustrations to guide my perceptions of the characters' physicality, which again only truly worked with Frog and Toad since the other characters are drawn much smaller and with fewer human attributes.

The original script is meant to be played by five actors for all sixteen characters, with one actor assigned to each role of Frog and Toad, and the other three actors performing the rest. Dr. Humphrey strayed from the original slightly by including another three actors to play the moles, whose parts he expanded to encompass the entire show, as they served as stage-hands and general helpers/backup singers throughout. Still, that left three actors playing twelve characters and sometimes exiting and returning as an entirely different character



within the same scene. Accordingly, much of my design was based on quick changes and what pieces could be over and underdressed or used as base pieces throughout the show, as actors transformed from character to character.

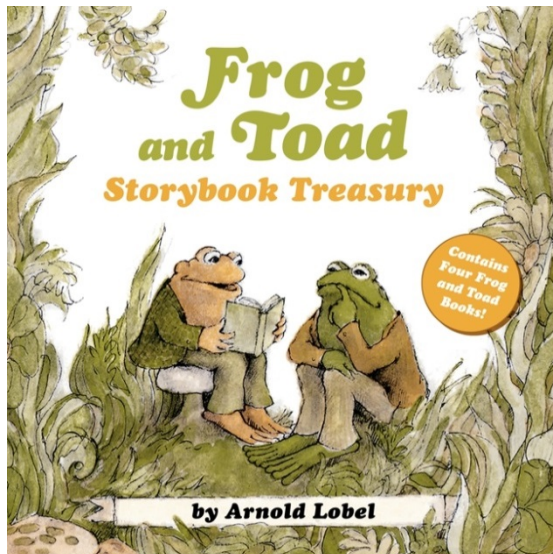


Figure 3.01: Original Frog and Toad cover art



Figure 3.02: Original Frog and Toad illustrations

## Research and Design

### Frog

Frog is a gentle, well-meaning sort of character with infinite patience and an 'everything-will-work-out' attitude. He is definitely the more laid-back and easy-going one of the pair. Because of this, I took a minimalist approach to his human attire. The research image I used as a basis for this approach is displayed in Figure 3.03. A long-sleeved dress shirt, vest, and golf pants make up the base of his ensemble, accompanied by oxfords, knee socks, tie, and newsboy cap. The golf pants, which remain puffy from hip to knee, draw attention to and distort the actor's legs. Since frogs are often times pictured hopping with their muscular hind legs, I believe this body part to be an important one to exaggerate. I also wanted to shape his body into a more amphibious form, so I

patterned the back of his vest to come to a point directly under the bum as a gesture towards an amphibian's prehensile tail. This alteration gave him the slightly upside down arrow-headed silhouette common among amphibians.

I amplified his frog-like appearance with color and texture: choosing green as my main color, not only because it is an iconic color for the animal, but also to tie in to Lobel's illustrations of his book character. Refer back to Figures 3.01 and 3.02. However, upon reviewing my research I noticed that oftentimes the underside of the creatures would be much lighter and of a different hue than their dorsal coloration, as seen in Figure 3.04. This, coupled with the lighting designer's warning against placing green too close to the actor's face, led me to design the shirt and the vest front in yellow and gold tones. Lowering the shoulder seam several inches on to the chest and using the same golden fabric on the side panels of the altered fiddle-back of the vest served to heighten the resemblance to the body of the animal. Plate 3.01 displays the rendering of Frog's costume.

I wanted Frog to be sleek and shiny to contrast Toad's costume, which I planned to design as pebble-textured and lumpy. To do this, I purchased fabric for the vest in polyester satin brocade, which would shine under stage lights. The plus fours (golf pants) I purchased online. Since they came in only courser-textured fabrics, such as cotton/poly blends, I hand dyed the already grass green trousers with various shades of darker green, yellow, and brown in long strips to give them a more watery and organic appearance. I also dyed his long socks in one of the shades of green so that they blended fluidly with the plus fours into one long continuous leg. The Final costume is below in Figure 3.05 and a back view is visible in Figure 3.06.

There are a few scenes in which Frog changes out of, or adds pieces to, his standard costume. For instance, at the opening of the show both he and Toad

are asleep and dreaming. During this sequence, I instructed the actor to remove his shoes, vest, and hat, and designed for him a long, two-toned green robe to wear over the rest of his ensemble. When winter comes to their pond, I gave him a bright green knit hat, green scarf and gloves, and a light green and blue sports coat to serve as winter gear. Afraid the new additions covered his frog-like appearance altogether, I tucked under and tacked the flaps of the back vent of the coat so that the point of his vest was still visible. See Figure 3.07.

During the sequence in which the two are swimming, and Toad is laughed at for his appearance in a bathing suit, I wanted Frog to be in a similar but much more flattering version of Toad's bathing suit. I therefore pulled and altered a one-piece, vintage-inspired union suit, which I dyed a mint green. Happily, the costume already had circle-esque patterning on it in blue and green, which contrasted well with Toad's stripes. The cut and loose way it hung on the actor's body made him look long and lean, also in contrast with his roly-poly friend. See Figure 3.08.



Figure 3.03: Human research for Frog



Figure 3.04: Animal research for Frog





Plate 3.01: Frog





Figure 3.05: Production photo of Frog and Toad





Figure 3.06: Production photo of Frog and Toad, view from behind





Figure 3.07: Production photo of Frog in winter attire



Figure 3.08: Production photo of Frog in a bathing suit

## Toad

Toad lacks the optimism and patience of his friend, and instead views the world through a pessimistic lens. In fact, many of the stories acted throughout the play end with the audience realizing how much Toad relies on Frog for happiness and security. He is much concerned about how he looks, being the first to point out and hypercriticize his appearance in a bathing suit, and leans towards being prissy in his actions and conduct. Nothing about the character is simple, even the decision whether or not to eat cookies is converted into a minutes-long song. I researched ensembles that were much more elaborate than Frog's, such as the gentleman in Figure 3.09. I eventually designed the following outfit: A dress shirt, vest, and suit jacket to comprise the top portion of his ensemble, and oversized jodhpurs and tall boots makeup the lower. The look is polished off with a bowler hat, and cravat.

To transform him from a well-dressed gentleman to a hyper-fastidious Toad, I fit the actor, who had a naturally well-proportioned frame, with a stuffed belly. I also had pockets sewn into the side panels of the jodhpurs and stuffed them with batting to give a substantial amount of girth to his thighs. To emphasize his toad-i-ness, and to pay homage to Lobel's illustrations, I had my team cut, sew, and stuff semi-circular shaped pillows and sew them to the back of the jacket to resemble warts. The added horizontal mass, puffy wart-like protrusions, and the rounded curve of the bowler hat had the effect of making the actor look shorter and squat; very toad-like.

Color and texture contributed to helping me achieve my vision of Toad. Having researched several images of toads (an example of such exists in Figure 3.10) I knew that I wanted a lumpy, porous, irregular texture, and I drew again from Lobel's illustrations to combine that texture with an orange, yellow, and brown color palette. I chose an orange jacquard vest with brown and red details



that, although not clearly seen from stage, added texture and visual interest to the front of his outfit. Layered over this was a brown wool suit jacket that was altered and textured with a variety of materials and techniques. First, I fabric painted the entire jacket in patches of orange, yellow, and warm brown, and then I used a splatter-paint technique to achieve a bumpy and irregular texture. Next I applied silicone in dots and larger circles all over the front of the jacket to give dimension—and just a hint of shine—as if he were a little slimy from living in his pond. To finish the jacket I strategically placed the aforementioned warts in shades of yellow and orange.

His jodhpurs were pulled from stock and constructed of heavy cotton. We had to add fabric to them in order to accommodate his stomach padding as well as balloon out his thighs, and I took the opportunity to stray somewhat from my original design: I chose medium-weight cotton with a brown, yellow, and orange pattern that tied together the colors in his jacket and also gave more texture down the sides of his legs.

As with Frog, there were some instances in which I had to alter this costume or exchange it for another to accommodate the demands of the individual scenes. For Toad's sleeping attire at the top of the show, I pulled a white linen nightgown which I then carefully tie-dyed using beads and string and yellow and brown dye to look as if warts covered the yoke and gathered in patches over the surface of the gown. I paired the gown with a yellow and white sleeping cap to complete his look. His winter attire consisted of a brown and orange plaid deerstalker hat, yellow highly-textured scarf, and brown gloves, as shown in Figure 3.12.

The much talked about and highly criticized bathing suit was originally designed in the same yellow, orange, and brown shades as the standard costume, with large yellow warts positioned across the front and the back.

However, Dr. Humphrey decided he didn't want Toad to look outrageously funny, and so the warts were scrapped. I bought the two piece bathing suit online, which was originally bright red and white. The polyester material was difficult to dye, but after several tries, I eventually got it down to cream and an orangey-red. I instructed the actor to tuck the top of the suit into the bottom, so that the curve of his large stomach was easily visible, and once his black boots were removed, the audience got a good look at his sock garters and yellow and brown socks. Although not my original design, Toad did, in fact, look funny in his bathing suit, pictured in Figure 3.13.



Figure 3.09: Human research for Toad



Figure 3.10: Animal research for Toad



Plate 3.02: Toad





Figure 3.11: Production photo of Toad





Figure 3.12: Production photo of Frog, Toad, and Moles in winter attire

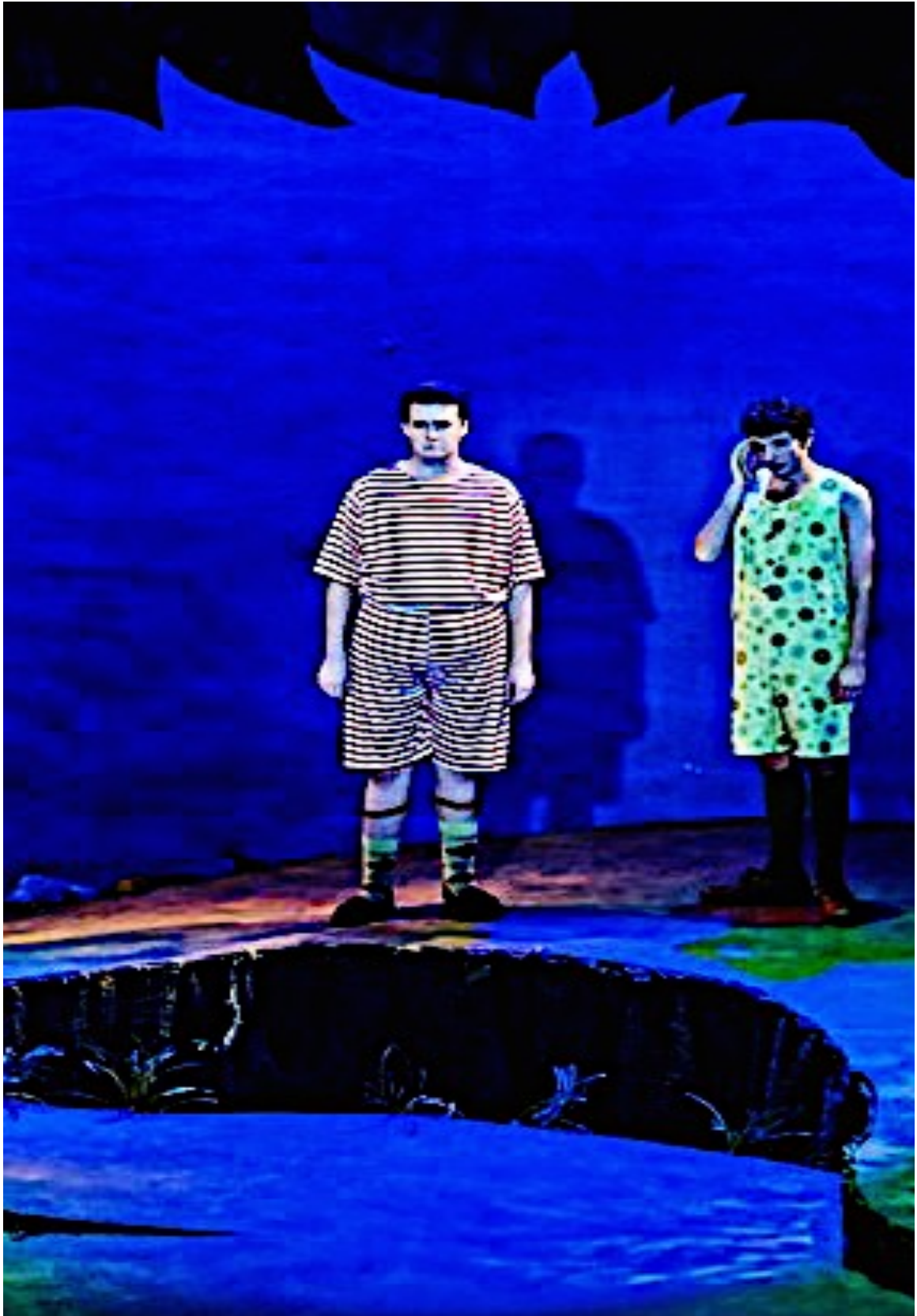


Figure 3.13: Production photo of Toad in his bathing suit



## Man Bird

Man Bird is the charismatic partial narrator of *A Year with Frog and Toad*. He and his fellow Lady Birds lead us with song into and out of the world of the play. When I researched this character, I immediately made the connection between birds in flight and airplanes, which lead me to the image of a 1930's pilot, Figure 3.14 His puffy, leather aviator jacket, with its large collar, and his tall boots immediately transformed in my mind into the breast and legs of a bird, and it was from this point that I began to design the character.

I stayed fairly true to the pilot's appearance. The costume was comprised of a long-sleeved shirt, faux leather aviator jacket, and wool trousers tucked into the top of slender knee-high boots, and was polished off by an aviator hat with attached goggles and a long, silk scarf. Since I doubted that most children would follow my thought process from bird to airplane pilot, I added wings of commercial-made white taffeta with feather-like pieces hanging off to the side and underarm seams of the jacket. This gave the actor plenty of room to move and do his choreography, and added a sense of movement to the otherwise very stiff ensemble. I sewed the same feathery fabric over the fleece on the collar to evoke a pigeon-breasted look.

Color was another aspect that helped the character better resemble a bird, and I looked to images of blue jays, using the bird in Figure 3.15 for inspiration. I brought in the vivid cobalt of the bird's wings to the outfit by purchasing leather paint and layering several coats over the brown faux leather of the aviator jacket. The cream of his shirt and the warm brown in his trousers also mimic the hues of the blue bird's body feathers and help ground the character in the earthy, rich tones prevalent through the rest of the characters. The rendering for Man Bird is displayed in Plate 3.03, followed by the production photo in Figure 3.16.



Figure 3.14: Human research for Man Bird



Figure 3.15: Animal research for Man Bird



Plate 1.03: Man Bird





Figure 3.16: Production photo of Man Bird

### Lady Birds

There are two lady birds which accompany the Man Bird wherever he goes and act as backup singers to his soulful solos. Because they are his companions and an extension of his musical 'act', I researched 'airplane stewardesses' of the 1930's and found images such as the one featured in Figure 3.17 of the first female flight attendant. I designed a sleek, linen skirt-suit for both birds, which included a single-breasted jacket, box pleated skirt, and cape, worn in conjunction with nude tights, character shoes, and a red envelope hat accessorized with feathers. I was most excited about the cape which, when lined with the same feathery tulle used with Man Bird's costume, made stylized wings. I also carried the tulle on to the lapels of the ladies' jackets to pull the outfits together, and to link them to their male companion.

At first I considered making the matching stewardess costumes in different colors so that each of the Lady Birds could have her own identity, but when considering how many characters, colors, and textures would be on stage at the same time as the Lady Birds, I decided it would be easier for the audience to recognize and group them if they were identical. With this in mind, I researched birds with colors that complemented the blue jay, and discovered the beautiful crimson of the cardinal in Figure 3.18. When the linen for the suits arrived, the red lacked the vivacity I desired, so we dyed the entire length of it to match the hue of my rendering before cutting and sewing the garments together.

Dr. Humphrey reworked much of the script while in the rehearsal process, and one of the changes he made was to add one of the Lady Birds to an evening scene in which she would wear a nightgown. My original design for the scene included a crimson negligee and a translucent chiffon robe with feathers adorning the sleeves and collar. However, inserting the actress into the scene cut down dramatically on the amount of time she had to quick change into Mouse (her

character for the following scene). Consequently, I scrapped the negligee dyed a knee-length satin robe crimson and added feathers to it so that she could underdress her Mouse costume and hide it under the robe for her entrance into the night scene. Both the stewardess uniform and robe are rendered in Plate 3.04. Unfortunately, there is no production photo of the robe, but the uniform is pictured in Figure 3.19.



Figure 3.17: Human research for Lady Birds



Figure 3.18: Animal research for Lady Birds





Plate 3.04: Lady Birds





Figure 3.19: Production photo of Lady Bird

## Snail

Snail, though a supporting character, is the heart of *A Year with Frog and Toad*. He steals the show both from the pages of the script and from the stage with his song-filled journey from a friendly but self-deprecating gastropod to a confident and accomplished member of the postal service. I knew the character's defining feature would be a shell, and the design went through several drafts as I tried out different human personas that would carry such an object. Finally, Snail's willingness to help his fellow pond creatures and his tenacity to fulfill his duty made me realize he would make a perfect Boy Scout, such as the two pictured in Figure 3.20.

The uniform was simple and easy to recreate; however I made a few notable changes to accommodate quick changes and to give him a snail-like appearance. The same actor who played Snail also played Man Bird, Lizard, and Father Frog; therefore, I instructed the actor to wear the same cream, long-sleeved cotton/polyester shirt for all four characters rather than changing into a short-sleeved shirt, such as the ones the boy scouts wear, for his role as Snail. I also lengthened the Boy Scout shorts into wide-legged, high-waisted trousers to make the bottom portion of him seem long and cylindrical to mimic the slug-like body of an actual snail. The iconic triangle scarf and brimmed cap (accessorized with protruding eyeballs) topped off his Boy Scout uniform and a rolled up bedroll strapped to his back served for the shell.

I had expected to make Snail a slimy creature, due to their reputation; however, I took inspiration from the image of a snail in Figure 3.21 which is actually quite beautiful. The vivid corals, brown, and purples in the shell, along with the irregular and intricate texture of the body led me to shibori dye the heavy cotton trouser fabric in those shades. The ending result is pictured in Figure 3.22. I further accentuated the warm red tones in the deep scarlet silk of the scarf. I



intended for the shell to stand out from the body, so I chose a warm grey that would complement but not blend into the other pieces. The shell was constructed from a grey and red reversible comforter wrapped around a sheet of bedding foam and rolled into a spiral. This meant that the spiral of the shell was enhanced by the red peeking through in that location and had the added benefit of further tying the costume together as an ensemble. Plate 3.05 and Figure 3.23 presents the rendering and production photo of Snail, respectively.



Figure 3.20: Human research for Snail



Figure 3.21: Animal research for Snail



Figure 3.22: Shibori dyed Fabric



Plate 3.05: Snail





Figure 3.23: Production photo of Snail



## Turtle

Turtle is the closet character this story has to a villain, but she only exists in one scene in which she leads the other pond animals in a rendition of “Get a Load a Toad”, a hurtful song meant to poke fun at Toad’s swimwear. Because of this, Dr. Humphrey and I thought it would be interesting if she were also in a bathing suit. I decided to make her a pinup bombshell so that her perfect attire and poise would make her allusions to Toad’s frumpy, unattractive suit even harsher. Using the photo of Jean Harlow in Figure 3.24 as inspiration, I designed a vintage-inspired, halter-top swimsuit with a belt and bow.

Once I had the foundation for her swimming costume, it was difficult trying to make her into anything resembling a turtle. I used images such as the one in Figure 3.25 to help me distinguish exactly what made a turtle recognizable. Of course there was the shell to consider, but strapping a large object to her back wouldn’t look right in her swim attire and distract from her pin-up girl look. I also knew that due to her choreography, whatever shell-like structure I gave her would probably have to be set aside during the dance sequence. She would still have to resemble a turtle without a shell. It was then that I turned my attention to the turtle’s head: rounded, shiny, and smooth. I translated this into a swim cap, which I designed and purchased in a yellow rubber-like material to match her bow.

For the shell itself, I decided on a rubber inner tube. I chose it for three reasons: It is a normal accessory for one to have while at the beach (or, in this case, pond), it was the correct proportion to be a believable shell for our actor, and it would be easily paintable to resemble the geometric shapes of turtle’s shells. For the latter, I first painted over the original graphics on the inner tube in black as a background. I then cut out octagon-shaped stencils and used blue, green, yellow, and turquoise paint to layer on the design. Since the first view the

audience got of Turtle was her reclining in the middle of the inner-tube sunbathing, she honestly looked like a turtle which had been flipped over on its back. She was then able to position the inner tube, and pose with it in varying ways so that at once it was her shell and also a prop in a pin-up photoshoot. The rendering for this costume is below in Plate 3.06, followed by the production photo in Figure 3.26.



Figure 3.24: Human research for Turtle



Figure 3.25: Animal research for Turtle



Plate 3.06: Turtle





Figure 3.26: Production photo of Turtle

## Lizard

Lizard is a small role, only appearing in one scene, and is utilized as a backup singer to Turtle during 'Get a Load a Toad'. Because he has very little character development in the script, he has very little personality to go off of when designing. After several failed renditions, Dr. Humphrey decided he would like a spruced-up dandy look. Pulling from images of 20's and 30's formal wear (See Figure 3.27) I designed a full tux: jacket, vest, trousers, bow-tie, and top hat. Shiny black oxfords completed the look. I then looked to photographs of lizards, such as the one pictured in Figure 3.28, to transform the top-notch gentleman into a dandy reptile.

The first thing I noticed about the bodies of the lizards was how long and lean their torsos were and how their legs, large and meaty at the shoulder, funneled down narrowly to where they connected to the clawed feet. I achieved these characteristics by designing both the slim-cut tux jacket and vest so that the waist seam hit at hip level, several inches below the actor's natural waist. I also extended the front of the jacket down to the top of the actor's thigh. These alterations gave the effect of elongating his torso. I also discarded the usual wide-legged trouser, correct for the period, in favor of stirrup pants which hugged the actor's legs from thigh to ankle and created more of a funnel shape. Lastly I took into consideration the lizard's tail and lengthened the tails of the tuxedo jacket so that they nearly brushed the floor when he stood and walked. The original idea was to wire them so that they curved up slightly, but once the actor put on the ensemble, I realized leaving them unwired provided much more movement and visual interest during the choreography.

Another thing I instantly noticed about the lizards was the variety of colors they displayed: Cool greens and blues effortlessly faded in and out of bright yellows and oranges. These colors became my color palette. We built most of the

pieces for this costume, and it became one of my biggest fabric alteration projects. I chose a darker blue-green polyester suiting fabric for the jacket and then used puff paint and stamps to paint designs on the surface. I used turquoise paint in a diagonal grid pattern on the lapels to evoke small, shiny scales like the ones found around the head of the lizard. I used the same paint, along with metallic silver and a diamond-shaped stamp, to create larger scales in patches along the whole outside of the jacket and sleeves. Using the diamond stencil again, I used yellow paint to create yellow scales along underside of the tux tails. For the vest, I chose blue chiffon with blue metallic-like texturing on the surface, along with turquoise satin. The trousers were made of cotton pile fabric, which I dyed a medium yellow green to pull in the yellow from the tails and to lighten the costume as a whole. The trousers were cut in such a way that the stirrups weren't needed to keep them from riding up, so they were discarded in the final product. Lizard's rendering is displayed in Plate 3.07 and his production photo in Figure 3.29.



Figure 3.27:  
Human research  
for Lizard



Figure 3.28: Animal research for Lizard





Plate 3.07: Lizard and Mouse





Figure 3.29: Production photo of Lizard

## Mouse

Mouse seems to be a sweet enough character. The first time the audience meets her is as another of Turtle's backup singers in "Get a Load a Toad," which doesn't do much to commend her; however, she also stops in at Toad's house and helps him bake cookies, so that somewhat makes up for her earlier rudeness. While the script gives us little in the way of a character description, she comes off as young and perky, so I chose to give her a youthful appearance and a spunky look. I found a pattern illustration (Figure 3.30) which depicts a young woman in an early version of a jumper, constructed from her husband's shirt. I duplicated the look by pulling a cream colored cotton/poly blouse from stock for the top and tucking it into a shortened pair of muslin bloomers as the shorts. The silhouette matched my research perfectly, and I began researching how to make it more mouse-like.

Mice, such as the one in Figure 3.31 are made recognizable by large ears, fat little bodies, and long, slender tails. I gave a chubby, rounded look to the otherwise very slim actor by patterning and constructing puffy sleeves for the blouse and padding out the bloomers. These were dyed a warm, mousy grey. I also designed a pink satin hair bow which, paired with curly buns, created the effect of large ears. This same fabric was used to construct a sash which connected with a faux bow in back with one end hanging down to represent a tail, as seen in Plate 3.08. To tie the bow and sash further into the ensemble, I used the leftover fabric from the bow and sash to line the collar of the blouse. (See Figure 3.32.)





Figure 3.30: Human research for Mouse



Figure 3.31: Animal research for Mouse



Plate 3.08: Mouse and Lizard





Figure 3.32: Production photo of Mouse and Turtle



## Squirrels

There are two squirrels written into a single scene of *A Year with Frog and Toad*. Their sole purpose is to create chaos and disperse the piles of leaves that Frog and Toad have secretly raked up for each other, so that when they return to their own houses, their respective yards are in disarray as if neither of them had ever been there. I mentioned to Dr. Humphrey that they reminded me of my obnoxious little cousins playing pranks on the farm, and he liked the idea that they could be children. I found a depression-era photograph in Figure 3.33 of two young boys in overalls. Since it is autumn in the world of the play, overalls and long-sleeved shirts would be a normal fashion trend and would be baggy enough to hide both actor's underdressed costumes, which had to be worn for the next scene.

The first thing that comes to mind when I think of squirrels is their big, fluffy tails, so I knew I wanted to incorporate that element in some way. I also found, by looking at pictures such as the one in Figure 3.34 that some squirrels also have very distinct ears. I personally own a winter hat with yarn tassels on the corners, which made me think that such a hat could be useful in evoking similar ears. Once the hat was designed, it was easy to see how a scarf could be made into a tail, and mittens into paws.

The construction of the tail was much more intricate in practice than in theory. I was honored that my mother volunteered to crochet the scarf-tails for me, so I purchased and sent her the materials. There were several prototypes made before the final product was acceptable. I was concerned that the weight of the six feet of yarn scarf/tail, plus the heavy wiring and the hardware used to keep the scarf from sagging, would be too much for the actors' necks to safely support. I resolved the problem by patterning the tail in two parts. The bulk of the tail was gathered onto a piece of thick twill and then sewn directly onto the back

of the overalls so that they would bear the weight. A second piece made from the same yarn was then wrapped loosely around the neck, and secured to the top of the tail piece using hooks which latched into the holes of the crochet stitching.

The end result looked like one long, continuous scarf.

I wanted the squirrels to look similar but not identical. Color was the best way to differentiate them. While researching squirrels I found that the two most common colors were brown and grey, so I purchased the cotton overalls in white and dyed each of them one of those colors. The yarn for the tails was also purchased in these two colors, as were the winter caps, and I used the left over yarn from the tails to make the tassels on either side of the hats. The same was done with the mittens (See Plate 3.09). Cream thermal undershirts, along with the basic silhouette of the costumes were the main factors that tied them together. A production photo of the Squirrels is located below in Figure 3.35.



Figure 3.33: Human research for Squirrels



Figure 3.34: Animal research for Squirrels



Plate 3.09: Squirrels





Figure 3.35: Production photo of Squirrels

### Father Frog

The Frog family acquaints us with Frog as a young boy and his mother and father in a fictitious story he makes up to scare Toad on a dark and stormy evening. Because the characters are figurative, and lack any depth or sincerity of character, it was more important to me that they look like generic frog people, rather than that their costumes were tailored to their personalities. For Father Frog, I searched for men's fashion of the 1930s and came up with the image in Figure 3.36 from which the gentleman on the left served as inspiration.

The jodhpurs, styled with long socks, give a robust look to the thigh. This shapes the actor's leg into a frog-like limb, as seen in Plate 3.10. Color was the other main element used to identify the actor as a frog: every article I pulled fit into the color pallet established in the character of Frog, and was taken from the same piece of animal research (refer back to Figure 3.04). The suit jacket is a windowpane pattern in lime green linen, and the wool jodhpurs and cotton socks are in shades of the same color. Yellow is used as an accent in the tie and the band around his porkpie hat. The original design included yellow lapels to tie in the yellow of the tie and hat; however, the final costume, displayed in Figure 3.37, looked complete without them, so they were omitted.



Figure 3.36: Human research for Father Frog





Plate 3.10: Frog Family





Figure 3.37: Production photo of Father and Mother Frog

### Mother Frog

Mother Frog falls into the same broad generalizations as Father Frog. I mainly wanted to combine a stereotypical fashion of the vaudevillian time with frog aesthetics without delving too much into her specific personality. Dr. Humphrey also mentioned that he was having the actor play the role as if she were a silent film actress with big, exaggerated motions. Accordingly, I designed an old-Hollywood style gown with a peplum which I exaggerated and stuffed so that her hips looked wide and full. The inspiration for the dress is pictured on the following page in Figure 3.38. Like Frog and Father Frog, this accentuation of the hips and legs was a way for the audience to understand that she too, was a member of the frog species. Again I used the established frog colors of green and yellow as rendered in Plate 3.11.

I pulled a dark green vintage silk, bias-cut gown from stock, and it served as the base for Mother Frog's costume. Since the original garment wasn't constructed with a peplum, I instructed my team to make a fabric belt from yellow satin. Peridot-colored, highly textured polyester crepe was then purchased, lined with the same yellow satin, made into split peplums and sewn, one over each hip, to the belt. A green and gold button served as a faux belt buckle. To bring the yellow satin and crepe fabric into the rest of the dress, I made double sets of different-sized bows out of the fabric and attached a smaller ones to each sleeve and a large one to the front of the bodice. Gloves in the same peridot shade as the peplums were worn with the finished costume, and a black wig fashioned into finger waves completed the outfit (see Figure 3.39).



Figure 3.38: Human research for Mother Frog





Plate 3.11: Frog Family



Figure 3.39: Production photo of Father and Mother Frog

### Young Frog

Young Frog is fictional version of Frog. He comes off as adorable, witty, and brave while facing The Great and Terrible Frog; however, since his actions merely mirror the story in Frog's dialog, very little of his heroics can be attributed to Young Frog himself. I chose to research young boys of the 1930s and hit the mark while looking at the picture of a little boy in Figure 3.40. The high-waisted knee-breeches, pulled high with tight suspenders make the child look adorably awkward and sweet, while the view of his socks peeking out of the top of his shoes heightens his youthful appearance. I also lengthened the socks so that they hit at the knee to associate him with his father who wears the same fashion and padded out the thighs of his breeches to give him the established frog silhouette (see Plate 3.12). I briefly played with the idea of somehow suggesting a tadpole with his costume, since tadpoles really are young frogs. However, I decided against it on the premise that the narrative took place on land and that the tadpoles shape would be difficult to simply and efficiently evoke with human clothing.

To realize my design, I pulled a yellow and white short-sleeved shirt with a collar (despite not having one in the design). I tucked this into blue-green hued wool knee-breeches from stock that I had my team alter to accommodate the thigh padding, and added green suspenders to complete the look. Long socks grew up out of hiking boots, which were not period, but matched the aesthetic of the costume. A brown newsboy cap covered the female actor's hair to make her more boyish and a green bow tie was added during dress rehearsal. A production photo of this costume is located in Figure 3.41.





Figure 3.40: Human research for Young Frog



Plate 3.12: Frog Family





Figure 3.41: Production photo of Young Frog



## Moles

The script calls for two moles; however Dr. Humphrey raised that number to three when he expanded their parts: one male and two female. With the director's changes, their characters spent more time on stage than any others, including the title characters. They worked together as a unit but had small personality variances within the group. My goal was to make uniforms that visually combined them but that had enough wiggle room to express individual, unique qualities. I also needed them to be visually interesting enough that the audience wouldn't get bored looking at them, but also discreet enough to not draw focus from the real action on stage. In the end, Dr. Humphrey had transformed them into glorified stagehands, so that is where I started my design.

I found pictures of 1930s era stagehands on the internet, such as the photo featured in Figure 3.42. With this image in mind, I designed the moles as all wearing men's trousers, even the two actresses, since women's pants weren't being mass-produced in the 30s and trousers are much easier to move a set around in than skirts. I coupled these with period shirts: the male mole wore a long-sleeved button up and a vest, while one female mole wore a turtleneck and the other a button up and vest. All the moles used suspenders to hold up their trousers and their own variation of a hat.

My research into moles made me realize that they were much less cute than what I'd imagined. Their plump, blimp-shaped silhouette left few distinguishing characteristics to work with, and their strange, fleshy paws (which are displayed in Figure 3.43) were the stuff of nightmares. Color and texture were all I had to work with. Moles come in variations of three colors: Black, brown, and grey. Therefore each article of clothing that I pulled to create the costumes either already existed in those colors or was dyed. Faux fur also became a largely utilized tool while designing and building the costumes. Vests were trimmed,

pants were cuffed, hats were banded, and suspenders were made from brown and grey faux fur. Still, in the world of the play the three actors could have been any furry creatures: bears, badgers, or a plethora of other mammals. I eventually fell back on a classic misconception that moles are blind, and I supplied each with a pair of 1930s-style glasses with dark lenses. I would have added canes too, but I felt carrying one along with everything else they had to do would have been a hindrance, and Dr. Humphrey was directing them in a way that prevented them from pretending to be blind. The rendering for these characters is located below in Plate 3.13, followed by a production photo in Figure 3.44.



Figure 3.42: Human research for Moles



Figure 3.43: Animal research for Moles

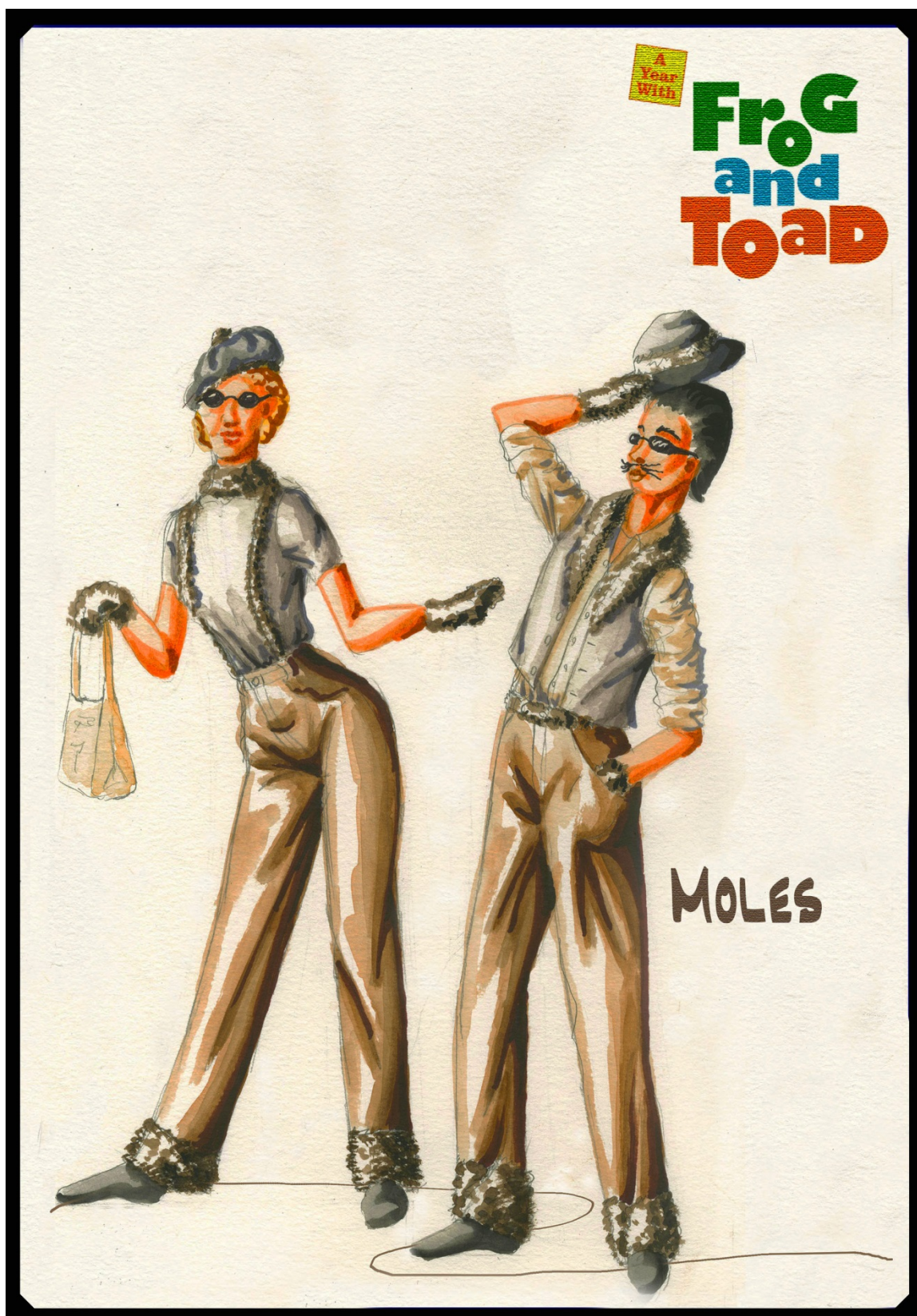


Plate 3.13: Moles





Figure 3.44: Production photo of Moles in winter attire

## Evaluation

I grew more as a designer during *A Year with Frog and Toad* than any other show. Working with Brian Humphrey was difficult, and I learned how to collaborate with a director who feels out of his depth, how and when to pick my battles, and how to stand up for the integrity of my designs. I learned how to look the part of a confident and enthusiastic designer, when I felt anything but, and how to calmly and maturely handle situations that, at the time, I felt were beyond my control. I believe that in the end we produced a show that we both could enjoy and take pride in.

My favorite part of the production process was fabric alteration. I took the time to research what kinds of paint and dye techniques could be used on different fabrics to get the looks I envisioned. In some instances, such as dyeing Toad's nightgown, I was more experimental: combining several techniques without any expectations of what the finished result would be. I did most of the painting and dying myself, although I cannot thank my advisor, Nancy Hills, enough for her help when I got overwhelmed.

There was one heartbreaking moment when the fabric I dyed for Snail's pants was accidentally washed, and the dye bled all over the fabric, ruining the aesthetic. I used the fabric anyway since it still had some color and pattern variation, and the audience couldn't know what they were seeing was an accident. Another difficult instance involved the heat to the costume shop being turned off over Thanksgiving break so that the paint I was using both on the fabric and inner tube froze before it could dry. This resulted in severe cracking on the surfaces of the painted objects, as well as flaking. I solved this problem by collecting as many space heaters as I could to warm the paint-deck where I was working. However, in these moments I learned how to critically think and problem solve or eventually accept defeat with grace and move on to other battles.

Seeing my designs for *A Year with Frog and Toad* on stage with the set and lights, being worn and given life by the amazing cast of actors, was the proudest moment I have had here at Utah State. Watching the show and listening to the audience all around me inhale and chatter as each new character entered the stage made me realize, for the first time, that I could be a successful, professional designer. This feeling was intensified when I won runner up with my *A Year with Frog and Toad* design at the Region XIII American College Theatre Festival the following semester. I will be forever grateful for the experiences and opportunities here at Utah State.





Figure 3.45: Production photo of ensemble

## References

- Advance 4586*. 1940s. Glamorous 2-piece Dress has a triangular keyhole neckline. Pattern
- Blitzie*. 1940. *Vogue*, New York. *Midvale Cottage Post*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://midvalevintagepost.blogspot.com/2011/04/blitzie.html>>.
- Brennan, Thomas C. *Eastern Collared Lizard*. 2008. Apache, CO. *Reptiles So Faz*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.reptilesfaz.org/Lizards-Subpages/h-c-collaris.html>>.
- Brown-lipped Banded Snail*. 2013. Warren Photographic Library on Nature and Pets. *Warren Photographic*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.warrenphotographic.co.uk/24753-striped-snail>>.
- Cardinal Close Look*. Stock Image. *Wallpaper Facets*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.fyqyz.com/326935-cardinal-close-look.html>>.
- Don't Bet on Women*. Dir. William K. Howard. Perf. Edmund Lowe and Jeanette McDonald. Fox Film Corporation, 1931. Film.
- Eastern Blue Bird*. *Bluebirds in North Carolina*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://hubpages.com/animals/Bluebirds-In-North-Carolina#>>.
- Eddie August Henry Schneider*. 1930. *Famous Aviators from Germany*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.ranker.com/list/famous-aviators-from-germany/reference>>.
- Ellen Church*. 1930. Life. *LIFE*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://life.tumblr.com/post/598535288/ellen-church-i-became-the-worlds-first>>.
- European Mole 00064952*. DK Images. *DK Images*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <[http://www.dkimages.com/?13821255725317294103&SEARCHTXT1=animals+mammals+insectivores&SEARCHMODE=NEW&EVENT=WEBSHOP\\_SEARCH](http://www.dkimages.com/?13821255725317294103&SEARCHTXT1=animals+mammals+insectivores&SEARCHMODE=NEW&EVENT=WEBSHOP_SEARCH)>.
- Florida Box Turtle*. 2011. Jacksonville. *Wikipedia*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common\\_box\\_turtle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_box_turtle)>.
- Go into Your Dance*. Dir. Archie L. Mayo. 1935.
- Golfing Brothers at the Leatherhead Golf Club*. 1935. Central Press. *Getty Images*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/golfing-brothers-r-a-whitcombe-e-r-whitcombe-and-c-a-news-photo/3432551>>.
- House Mouse*. 2013. Warren Photographic Library on Nature and Pets. *Warren Photographic*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.warrenphotographic.co.uk/24753-striped-snail>>.
- Jean Harlow*. 1935. *Bio*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.biography.com/people/jean-harlow-9328918>>.

- Jewish Children*. 1930s. Karl's Friend, Poland. *Flickrriver*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<<http://www.flickrriver.com/photos/58039671@N00/5550622020/>>.
- Kenny, Kath. *Green and Golden Bell Frog*. 2011. University of Sydney, Sydney.  
*University of Sydney News*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<<http://sydney.edu.au/news/84.html?newsstoryid=6979>>.
- Lobel, Arnold. *Adventures of Frog and Toad*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2009.  
Print. Cover illustration.
- Lobel, Arnold. *Frog and Toad All Year*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 2009. Print.  
Book illustration.
- "Pop" W.R.Johnstone with two Cub scouts. 1948. *Wikimedia Commons*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22Pop%22\\_W.R.Johnstone\\_with\\_two\\_Cub\\_scouts.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22Pop%22_W.R.Johnstone_with_two_Cub_scouts.jpg)>
- Stage Hands*. 1930s. IATSE, New York. *IASTE Local One-History of Local One*.  
Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<[http://iatselocalone.org/Public/Local\\_One\\_at\\_125/History\\_of\\_Local\\_One.aspx](http://iatselocalone.org/Public/Local_One_at_125/History_of_Local_One.aspx)>.
- Two Farm Boys in Overalls*. 1930s. Stock Photo. *Alamy*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<<http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-two-farm-boys-in-overalls-stand-for-a-portrait-in-a-field-during-the-43805331.html>>.
- Trimming, Peter. *Red Squirrel*. 2011. Alverstone Mead Nature Reserve, Sandown. *Flickr*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<https://www.flickr.com/photos/peter-trimming/6583159839/>>.
- Wimborne, Tim. *Cane Toad*. 2013. Reuters. *Nature World News*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015. <<http://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/2777/20130703/deadly-cane-t-nearly-wiped-out-dwarf-crocodile-population-australia.htm>>.
- 1930s Spring Outfits*. *Gentleman's Gazette*. Web. 8 Aug. 2015.  
<<http://www.gentlemansgazette.com/spring-style-men-short-lapel-suit-1930/>>.